



Written by
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FADE IN:

1 INT. GREG'S BEDROOM - MORNING.

It's an average black teenager's bedroom. A little messy, with posters of rappers and female singers on the wall.

GREGORY REED, 17, sleeping peacefully in the bed. Greg is the average black teenager. In fact, Greg is not especially good at anything, except imagining that he's good at something.

THE SUN SHINES through a window on Greg's sleeping face. Greg stirs, then sits up. He whips off the covers to reveal himself fully dressed in some serious fly gear.

A SLAMMIN' RAP TRACK KICKS IN. Greg gets up and dances a while, then he notices the camera.

GREG

(Raps)

I GOT EVERYTHANG,
ANYBODY COULD EVER WANT,
MO' MONEY THAN A BANKING VAULT.
MO' HEAT THAN THE SUN IN JUNE.
MO' BITCHES THAN THE LADIES' ROOM.

Greg pulls back more covers on his bed, revealing TWO FINE BACKUP SINGERS. They leap out of the bed, and dance:

SINGERS

G'S GOT IT, HE'S GOT
EVERYTHANG!
G'S GOT IT, HE'S GOT
EVERYTHANG!

GREG

YEAH, I GOT STYLE
EVERYTHANG I DO WITH CLASS.
HIT RECORDS COMIN' OUT MY ASS.
GOT POWER LIKE YOU NEVER KNEW.
ANOTHER RHYME AND I GOT YOU TOO!

SINGERS

G'S GOT IT, HE'S GOT
EVERYTHANG!
G'S GOT IT, HE'S GOT
EVERYTHANG!

Greg dances with the backup singers, simulating sex.

LOUISE (o.s.)

Greg!

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

Greg looks confused for a second, then goes back to simulated sex with the singers.

 LOUISE(o.s.) (cont'd)
Gregory Reed!

FLASH CUT TO:

2 INT. GREG'S BEDROOM - MORNING.

Greg wakes up for real. He looks at the covers where the backup singers were. He pulls them back to reveal JASON REED, 10, his younger brother.

 LOUISE (o.s.)
Greg! School time. I'm not gonna tell you again, boy!

 GREG
Alright, I'm up!
 (mumbles)
Damn.

 LOUISE (o.s.)
Get your brother up, too.

Greg shakes Jason. Jason responds by kicking Greg. Greg hit his brother upside the head, knocking him out of bed with a THUD.

CUT TO:

3 INT. REED KITCHEN - LATER THAT MORNING.

A TYPICAL, WORKING CLASS HOME. The Reed family is having breakfast. LOUISE REED, 45. Louise is a no-nonsense working mother. WILLIE REED, 48, Greg's father. He's a no-nonsense blue-collar dad. Jason sits next to Greg. GRAMPS, 75, is with them. Gramps wears some thick-ass glasses.

 GRAMPS
Where's the bacon?

 WILLIE
Daddy, you know you can't have bacon.

 GRAMPS
Why the hell not?

 LOUISE
Because it's bad for your health, Daddy Reed. And did you take your medicine, yet?

(CONTINUED)

GRAMPS

No, I'm waiting for some bacon to go with it.

WILLIE

I'll get the medicine.

Willie gets up and leaves.

JASON

Greg pushed me outta the bed, ma.

GREG

No, I didn't. Shut up, you little punk.

LOUISE

Don't call him that, and I heard him hit the floor.

Willie comes back with some pills.

GRAMPS

Somebody give me some of that bacon.

JASON

You can have mine, Granddaddy.

WILLIE

No, he can't. Eat that food, boy.

GREG

Ma, Dad, when are y'all gonna hook a brother up with some ends for the prom?

LOUISE

I'll answer you, if you ask me in English.

GRAMPS

I want some damn bacon!

WILLIE

No. Here, take these pills.

LOUISE

The doctor said to avoid meat.

GRAMPS

So I die Wednesday instead of Thursday, who gives a shit? Now, give me some bacon, or I'm gonna spit on everybody's food!

Everyone covers their plates. He's done this before.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIE

Okay, okay, here. Eat the damned bacon.

Willie gives Gramps some bacon.

GRAMPS

Thank you, son.

GREG

(proper English)

Parents? Can you find it in your heart to give your son some money to fund my senior prom activities?

LOUISE

No.

WILLIE

Hell no.

GREG

Aw, come on, now. It's my senior prom. I know y'all ain't gonna leave me hangin', wearing my Easter suit, and riding the Iron Pimp.

WILLIE

Iron what?

JASON

Iron Pimp, the bus, Daddy.

LOUISE

Greg, you have a job. You can fund your own prom activities.

GREG

Yo, I can't get a fly tux with what I make at the Rib Shack. It's barely minimum wage.

WILLIE

I told you to save your money, boy. But you had to go and get some hundred dollar basketball shoes.

GREG

Daddy, they're Kobe Bryants. Necessary gear for a brother.

LOUISE

Well, you'll be necessarily naked at your prom, because you ain't getting no money here.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Daddy...

WILLIE

Don't even try it.

GREG

Gramps, can you help me?

GRAMPS

Don't ask me. I just had to show my ass to get a strip of bacon.

GREG

(to Willie and Louise)

Why y'all comin' down on me?

LOUISE

Because you're a senior, and you haven't filled out one college application yet.

WILLIE

What the--? Greg, you promised me you'd take care of that.

GREG

I'm gonna get `round to it.

WILLIE

Well, we'll get 'round to giving you money for the prom.

LOUISE

Greg, what are you gonna do after you graduate?

GREG

Come on y'all, not that again.

LOUISE

Yes, that again. You think we're going to let you hang around here on the street with the rest of those good-for-nothings?

WILLIE

Over my dead body.

(to Greg)

And yours too.

LOUISE

You'd better get on the case, Greg.

WILLIE

Start thinking about your future...

(CONTINUED)

As Willie and Louise rant on, Jason sneaks Gramps his bacon. TIGHT ON: Greg listening to them. WE HEAR A LOUD KNOCKING ON THE DOOR. PAN TO DOOR: Which opens to reveal: A man wearing a "HARVARD" shirt. He walks to the table, smiling confidently and addresses the family.

HARVARD MAN

Sorry to barge in, like this, but this is urgent. Greg, I'll get right to it. We want you at Harvard University. I think you'd fit right in.

LOUISE

Of course he would. Greg is a wonderful son.

WILLIE

Makes me wanna have sex with his mama again.

LOUISE

(to Greg)
You want something to eat, baby?

GREG

No, I'm cool.

JASON

I'm hungry, Ma.

Louise slaps Jason upside his head.

LOUISE

Don't interrupt me when I'm talking to your big brother! I'll stomp a mud hole in your ass!

(then, sweetly, to Greg)
Greg, we got your special prom bank account all set up. Spend as much as you want.

GREG

Thanks, Ma.

HARVARD MAN

Like I was saying, Harvard really needs bright young men like Greg at our institution. We'll do anything to get him to enroll.

GREG

Yo, what kind of honeys y'all got up in there?

(CONTINUED)

HARVARD MAN

"Honeys"?

GRAMPS

Women, dumb-ass.

HARVARD MAN

Ah yes, honeys. Well, Harvard boasts some of the most intelligent, refined young women in the...

GREG

Next!

Harvard Man exits, a black man wearing a "HOWARD UNIVERSITY" shirt enters.

HOWARD MAN

Greg, my brother, you don't need to get educated with the white man. Remember what he's done to our people. You'll be there two seconds, before you'll wanna go "Amistad" on their asses. Howard, the country's premiere black university, wants you.

WILLIE

My son is concerned about the kind of women you got there. We're expecting him to have a lot of sex while he's in college.

The whole family echoes this sentiment. Willie hands Greg a HUGE box of condoms.

GREG

I know that's right!

HOWARD MAN

Well, Howard has some of the finest sisters in the world. And they all give it up easy.

LOUISE

Good. I don't like Greg to wait for the booty.

GREG

I love you, Ma.

(to Howard Man)

So, what about sports? What kind of basketball team y'all got?

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD MAN

(nervous)

Well, uh, we got a team, you know, but it ain't exactly...

GREG

Where'd y'all place in the NCAA Finals last year?

HOWARD MAN

We don't have that caliber of team right now, but we do have the finest lacrosse team in the--

The family reacts, shocked and angry.

WILLIE

Negro, say what?! You want my son to play lacrosse! Why don't you just make him wear some damn panties! Get outta here.

HOWARD MAN

But...

WILLIE

Get out before I whip your natural black ass!

Willie chases Howard Man out of the room.

GREG

(calling after him)

Peace out, my brother!

Howard Man exits. A GORGEOUS BLACK WOMAN, wearing a "MINNESOTA" shirt enters.

GREG (cont'd)

(laughs)

Minnesota?! What do y'all have to offer up in cow country?

MINNESOTA WOMAN

These...

Minnesota Woman rips her shirt open, she has two HUGE BREASTS. Minnesota Woman grabs Greg and pushes his face into her chest.

LOUISE (o.s.)

Greg, what are you doing?

FLASH CUT TO:

4 INT. REED KITCHEN - REALITY.

Greg snaps back to reality. He's licking at a forkful of eggs. His parents are still ranting.

LOUISE

Greg, are you listening to me?

GREG

Huh?

JASON

Greg's trippin' again.

LOUISE

Greg, what's wrong with you?

GREG

Nothing. I was just... thinking, that's all.

LOUISE

You'd better stop that daydreaming, boy.

WILLIE

Been doing it since he was a baby. Life is real, Greg. You'd better get real with it.

LOUISE

No prom money unless you get some college applications going.

WILLIE

Damn skippy. Everybody down at the pier is talking about their kids going to college. I'm not gonna be embarrassed by you.

GREG

(sarcastic)

There's a good reason to go to college.

WILLIE

Boy, you'd better watch your mouth before you be looking on the floor for it.

JASON

I'm going to college, daddy. I'm gonna be a astronaut.

WILLIE

There you go. See Greg, even your little brother knows what time it is.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

LOUISE
And it's time to do something with your
life.

(beat)
Well, what do you say, Greg?

Greg is silent.

LOUISE (cont'd)
Greg...

PUSH IN to Greg's frustrated face.

JUNE (v.o.)
Man, fuck college.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. DU BOIS HIGH SCHOOL - NINE AM.

It's a big high school. Fresh-faced urban students mill
about. Activity is rampant.

A picture of W.E.B. DuBois on a school wall. Someone has put
a joint in his hand, and written a dialogue bubble which
says: "Five weeks to the prom: Get high now!"

Greg walks along with JUNE NELSON, 18, his best friend. June
is handsome, cool, and confident, everything Greg is not.
June is dressed in expensive clothes.

JUNE
My moms is always nagging me about
college, too. I just ignore her.

GREG
Yeah, I told my old lady I ain't even
tryin' to hear that shit, you know?

JUNE
Naw, you couldn't have said that, 'cause
you still got all your teeth.

A MALE STUDENT comes up to June. They do a quick play, the
student slapping June some money, and June slapping him a
plastic bag. The student moves on.

GREG
June, you shouldn't be selling at school.

JUNE
Hey, I gotta get paid. I saw these sweet
red alligator shoes. I got to have them
bad boys. I even cut my weed to stretch
it out, you know.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

GREG

How could you cut it anymore? You put in so much Oregano, I wouldn't know whether to smoke it, or make spaghetti.

JUNE

How you gonna dog me? Broke-ass, blue jean wearin' nigga?

GREG

Well, what about Kenyatta? You selling in his land.

JUNE

Yo, fuck Kenyatta.

June looks around nervously, then:

JUNE (cont'd)

He don't own me.

Greg shakes his head. LARONDA, a pretty girl, walks up to June.

LARONDA

Hey, June. Hey, Greg.

JUNE

LaRonda, wha'sup, baby?

LARONDA

(sweet)

The Prom. You're taking me, remember?

JUNE

No, I'm not.

LARONDA

(nasty)

What?! I already got the dress picked out!

JUNE

I changed my mind. Sorry.

LARONDA

After you got with me.

JUNE

Not right after. That was two weeks ago.

LARONDA

You sorry, no-good, low-life, lyin' ass...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

JUNE

Whatever.

June pulls Greg away as LaRonda keeps ranting.

JUNE (cont'd)

Dang, what's her problem?

GREG

You'd better watch out, June. These women take the prom seriously.

JUNE

Forget her. I got my eye on somebody special for the prom.

DARIUS "FISH" WALKER, 17, runs up, in full hip-hop regalia. Fish is crazy and full of energy. He slams into them.

FISH

What's up, my niggas?

June and Greg ad lib hellos. They all walk toward the school.

JUNE

You find out where Carl's sneak party is?

FISH

No, but I'm on it.

GREG

I'm tired of his ass. Man gives a party, and don't tell nobody where it is. I thought he was you boy, June. Why don't you ask him.

JUNE

Well, I kinda stole his woman last semester.

FISH

Ripped her right off his dick!

June and Fish slap five.

JUNE

And no one knows about the party, cause people get busy at the sneak. But you wouldn't know that.

GREG

Hey, I gets mine, aw'ight?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

FISH

Bullshit. You ain't got no ass at any of them parties.

GREG

I did, I just don't brag like some big-mouthed people.

JUNE

Anyway, I'm gonna hook up with my soon-to-be-woman, Dennia Braxton at this next sneak party.

GREG

Boy, are you crazy? Dennia is kicking it with Snap, that big brother from the football team.

JUNE

Yeah, well, she'll be kicking it with me in a minute.

Another student comes by, and June does a quick transaction.

FISH

Now, all he needs is something to get high with.

JUNE

Shut the fuck up.

FISH

Yo, fellas, I got the hook-up on the baddest, flyest limo for the prom. Wet bar, cellular phone, double moon roof. It's even got a jacuzzi in the back of that muthafucka!

GREG

Why you so jazzed for the Prom? You might not make it.

JUNE

Yeah. You been left back twice, nigga.

FISH

I told you. That shit was a conspiracy.

GREG

Right. You gonna need a damned time machine to graduate.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (4)

FISH

I feel lucky this year. I'm know I'm gonna make it this time. So, I am hittin' that prom in style.

JUNE

Cool. Now, all you need is a date.

FISH

I thought you was gonna hook me up, June. You the man.

JUNE

I'm the man, but I ain't Jesus.

They enter the school.

CUT TO:

6 INT. SCHOOL.

The fellas move through the metal detectors, past ANGRY-LOOKING SECURITY GUARDS. They don't blink as the guards frisk them.

FISH

What you talkin' `bout? The bitches love me.

GREG

That's what he's talking about. You got a bad rep, man.

JUNE

And you ugly, too.

FISH

Fuck both of y'all.

JUNE

Seriously, this is something you got to deal with.

FISH

Just 'cause I ain't pretty and use makeup like you.

JUNE

Yo, it's skin cleanser, nigga.

FISH

Yeah, they keep it right next to the pantyhose.

Fish and June ad lib arguing with each other. CINNY HAWKINS, 17, and seriously fine walks by.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

Greg is in deep, serious, "give-up-your-last-money" love with Cinny. TIGHT ON CINNY'S CURVES. Greg confidently walks up to Cinny and the group of girls.

GREG
Cinny, it's time, baby.

Cinny spins around, surprised.

CINNY
Time? Time for what?

GREG
Me and you, girl.

GIRL #1
Excuse me, but you just got with me last night at seven-thirty.

GREG
That was then, this is now.

GIRL #2
And he got with me at eight-thirty.

GIRL #1
Look, Greg is mine, ho!

GIRL #2
I got your ho-- ho!

The two girls start to fight aggressively. Greg steps to Cinny.

GREG
They don't mean nothing to me, really. It was just sex. Butt-slammin-cold-sweatin'-calling-out-to-Jesus sex, but just sex.

CINNY
Oh, I understand.

Greg pulls Cinny to him tightly as the two girls tussle.

GREG
(seductively)
Tell me what you want, baby.

CINNY
(Fish's voice)
Five hundred dollars.

FLASH CUT TO:

7 INT. SCHOOL - REALITY.

Fish is talking.

GREG

Say what?

FISH

...All we need is five hundred dollars, and we got that limo. I don't wanna do it without my boys. This is a great moment in my life. And I love y'all.

GREG

No.

JUNE

Naw, man.

FISH

Fuck y'all then. I don't need ya.

The fellas walk right past Cinny and some other students. ANETTA JONES, 16. A plump, nerdy-looking girl walks up. June breaks off from the guys, and pretends to guide Anetta in like a ramp agent does an airplane.

JUNE

Step back everybody, wide load comin' in!

ANETTA

Shut up, June.

FISH

Watch the tail, it's swingin' right!

June waves her left. Fish pretends to panic, then makes crashing noises. The other students laugh. Anetta is embarrassed. Greg laughs, until he sees that Cinny is upset. Cinny goes to Anetta, and they walk off.

CUT TO:

8 INT. A CLASSROOM - LATER THAT MORNING.

It's a twelfth grade literature class. Greg, June, and Cinny are in the class. The class chatters loudly.

A BOOM BOX kicks out a RAP TUNE. STAN SHAPIC enters. The students reacts: "Aw man" "Substitute" and the like. Shapic is a thirtyish, very cool, unorthodox teacher. He turns the box off.

MR. SHAPIC

(re: boom box)

I took this from a student last period.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
 Not because he played it in class, but
 because he was playing a weak-ass tune.

The class laughs. Shapic goes to the board, and writes.
 "Mr. Shapic", then "Harlem Renaissance". The class groans.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
 Come on now, you know the substitute
 teacher has to have something on the
 board, in case the principal comes by.
 So, we have to talk about it. Harlem
 Renaissance: some brothers wrote a lot of
 good shit, the end.

The class laughs. Shapic walks through the class throughout.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
 Okay, who said: "Come to me with your
 passion, and I will show you the secret
 that is life?"

CHAMBERS, a nerdy kids raises his hand.

CHAMBERS
 Langston Hughes, I believe.

MR. SHAPIC
 No, I just said it, Mr. Chambers, 'cause
 I'm deep like that.

Class laughs again.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
 We all make our own life philosophy, we
 just have to learn to articulate it. The
 Renaissance writers put their philosophy
 into their work, I want you to put yours
 into action.

(points to Cinny)
 Ms. Hawkins, I'm a prospective employer,
 and I'm trying to see if I should give
 you a job, or dump you like so much
 unemployable trash. So, I ask you to
 describe yourself for me in a sentence.
 What do you say?

CINNY
 I'd say, I'm a hard worker, my G.P.A. is--

MR. SHAPIC
 Hold up. I'm a crazy employer, I majored
 in philosophy. I want you to give me the
 essence of yourself, the reason beyond
 the obvious as to why I should hire you.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

Shapic looks at her expectantly. Cinny thinks, then:

CINNY

Then, I'd say, I am a light that illuminates the answer to everything you need to know.

MR. SHAPIC

Damn! That's all right. You're hired. You get the job, a bonus, and a company car-- that's not quite as nice as mine.

The class laughs again. Shapic sees Greg staring at Cinny.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)

What would you say, Mr. Reed?

Greg is shocked.

GREG

I... Uh.. I'd say... you should hire me 'cause I'm black... you could get in trouble if you don't.

The class laughs at Greg.

MR. SHAPIC

(makes buzzer noise)

I just pushed a button on my desk and called security on you, Greg. You don't get the job, you don't get a bonus, and we point your ass toward the subway.

The class laughs. Greg is embarrassed.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)

If you don't know yourself, people what do you know? Nothing. School is about more than memorizing what great people did. It's learning to find your own greatness.

Greg walks to the front of the room and turns to the class.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)

Students, it's my pleasure to introduce that renown author, poet, and my former student: "G" Reed.

Greg walks in, dressed to the nines. The class claps. The women swoon. Greg gives Cinny a sexy look. She smiles.

GREG

I really didn't have time to come here, but Mr. Shapic is my boy, and shit.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (3)

MR. SHAPIC

"And shit." His words are so powerful.

GREG

Right, right. Mr. Shapic gave me the only double A plus in the school's history.

MR. SHAPIC

You deserved it, Greg. It was my pleasure just to have you as a student.

GREG

True. Well, I have to get to NBA practice. But I thought I'd read you a poem from my new collection: "G's Ghetto Mind, Volume Two."

The class applauds.

GREG (cont'd)

This is called: "Don't Be Fuckin' Wif' My Shit."

(clears his throat, then)
recites)

DON'T BE FUCKIN' WIF' MY SHIT.
GET YO' OWN STUFF, YOU GREEDY BITCH!
KEEP YO' HAND OFF MY CLOTHES.
KEEP YO' EYES OFF MY CASH,
OR I'LL BREAK OFF A SIZE TWELVE UP
IN YOUR MUTHAFUCKIN' ASS!

Class applauds wildly. Shapic smiles. Cinny smiles at Greg.

GREG (cont'd)

IF I FIND TWO DOLLARS,
WHEN I KNOW I HAD SEVEN,
I'LL BE ON YO' SORRY ASS LIKE
FIVE MINUTES TO ELEVEN! SO,
TAKE MY ADVICE,
DON'T BE A FOOL.
BACK OFF WHAT'S MINE AND
EVERYTHANG WILL BE COOL.
SO, YOUR EYES MAY LOOK,
AND YO TEETH MAY GRIT,
BUT DON'T BE FUCKIN'
WIF' MY SHIT!

Class gives Greg a standing ovation. Greg walks over to Cinny. Cinny smiles.

CINNY

That was... I can't find the words to say how brilliant you are.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (4)

A BELL RINGS.

FLASH CUT TO:

9 INT. CLASSROOM - REALITY.

The class jumps up, and begins to leave. Greg watches as the class leaves. PUSH IN ON: Greg's face, lost in his own world.

MR. SHAPIC (o.s.)
I know what you're thinking.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: Shapic's face right next to his.

GREG
(startled)
Whoa! Don't do that, man.

MR. SHAPIC
I see the way you look at Ms. Hawkins all the time.

ANGLE ON: Cinny laughing with a few friends.

GREG
All the time? Not me.

MR. SHAPIC
Yes, you. That young lady is one of the most exceptional students I've had the pleasure of teaching. You can just look at her and see she's destined for greatness. You can feel it radiate from her when she's around you. Men are drawn to women with greatness in them, Greg. A man needs that power to fuel his own dreams. And when you look at her, you feel like if you could just have her, even just for a second, that all your problems would go away, and there'd be nothing in life that you couldn't do. And you know what--?

Greg looks at Mr. Shapic, expectantly reacting to the truth in his words.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
You'll never get her.

Greg reacts, hurt.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
 You don't get to the moon riding a
 bicycle. And you don't get a woman like
 that, half-assing.

Greg gives Mr. Shapic a mean look.

GREG
 I ain't half-assing nothing. I just gave
 a bad answer.

MR. SHAPIC
 It's more than that, Greg, I've watched
 you become a young man here. But I've
 also watched you become afraid of trying
 to better yourself.

GREG
 Hey, I'm gonna graduate.

MR. SHAPIC
 A high school diploma just gets you into
 the game. The real shit starts the day
 after-- life starts, Greg. Are you ready
 for it?

GREG
 Yes... I don't know. Yo, why you always
 on my case?

MR. SHAPIC
 Because I care. It's back in style
 again.

GREG
 Look, Mr. Shapic, I'm not smart, I can't
 play sports, and I can't sing or dance.
 What's life gonna have for me?

MR. SHAPIC
 There's more to life than basketball and
 rap music, Greg. What life has for you,
 is only as good as what you bring to it.
 Now, I have information on community
 college, the armed services, trade school-

-

GREG
 No. I don't wanna go to trade school.
 That's for stupid people.

MR. SHAPIC
 Okay Greg, fine, but it's time to face up
 to the realities of life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
It's time for hard choices, and only you
can make them, my brother.

Shapic leaves. Greg looks saddened by this, as we:

CUT TO:

10 EXT. SCHOOL - LATER.

It's a recess period. Greg sits with June on a bench.

GREG
June, what you gonna do after school is
over?

JUNE
I don't know. What I always been doing,
I guess.

GREG
June, you can't make a living selling
weed.

JUNE
Why not? They got a bill in Congress
right now to legalize it. When they do,
I'm gonna open a store.

GREG
A weed store?

JUNE
Yeah. I'm gonna call it "June's Blunt
Heaven." Check it out. I'm gonna have a
little restaurant right next door, so
after they smoke, the munchies hit and--
bam! I get crazy paid again.

GREG
Okay, but what if the law don't pass,
then what?

JUNE
(beat)
Don't piss on my dream, G.

A sexy young girl, DENNIA BRAXTON, walks by. Dennia is like,
crazy fine. She smiles at June.

JUNE (cont'd)
Hey, Dennia.

DENNIA
Hey, yourself.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

EUGENE "SNAP" JOHNSON, 18, walks up next to her. Snap is huge. He glares at June and Greg as they walks off.

GREG

Damn, that's a big boy.

JUNE

No. That's a fine woman. Man, I gotta have that.

GREG

June, some things ain't worth the trouble. Do you know why they call him Snap?

JUNE

Yeah, he broke some skinny brother's arm in football.

GREG

Two brothers. And they wasn't skinny.

June suddenly ducks under the bench behind Greg as LaRonda passes by.

GREG (cont'd)

She's gone, man.

JUNE

Cool. Some females be trippin'.

A RAP TUNE RISES. Greg turns to see Cinny with Anetta and some other girls listening to a boom box. Cinny raps along with the tune. Greg stares.

JUNE (cont'd)

Man, when you gonna stop staring at Cinny and push up on that?

GREG

I can't just go up to her.

JUNE

Oh, so, you don't mind if I give it a try...

June moves toward Cinny, Greg grabs June by the arm.

GREG

(mad)
Yo, man...

June gives Greg a knowing look.

JUNE

So, go on and talk to the woman.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

Greg gets his courage up, and starts towards Cinny, who finishes her rap. The other ladies exchange props and head off as Greg arrives.

GREG
Hey, you got a nice flow to your rap.

CINNY
Thanks--

GREG
Greg.

CINNY
Right. Sorry.

GREG
I, uh-- I was talking to my boy back there, and we was wondering how come you ain't been arrested--

CINNY
For being so fine.

GREG
For being so fine.

CINNY
Yes, I've heard that.

ANETTA
My friend Cinny is an intellectual. You can't come here kicking that weak game-- do some math for her. Help out.

CINNY
(impatient)
Anetta...

ANETTA
Sorry, girl. My bad.

CINNY
Look Greg, I don't want to embarrass you. So, I'll smile, and act nice, so your boy won't think I dissed you.

Cinny smiles and touches Greg's shoulder. Greg is actually pleased.

ANETTA
Cinny, there he is!

ANGLE ON: A group of young boys. Cinny walks off with Anetta. Greg struts back to June.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

GREG
(false bravado)
Did you see that, my brotha?

JUNE
You get her phone number, my brotha?

GREG
No.

JUNE
Then I ain't seen shit.

Fish runs up, slamming into June and Greg.

FISH
What's up, my niggas!

JUNE
You find out about the sneak party yet?

FISH
No, but I'm close, real close. Check it out, I got the hook-up for real this time. After the prom, we can get a suite at the Concorde for only four hundred. We can take our dates there, get some champagne, and just hit it all night.

Fish fakes "hittin' it."

JUNE
Fish, you sure got some expensive plans for a man with no money.

GREG
And no woman.

FISH
Look, we're all gone hook this prom up, right? Y'all my boys, right?

Greg and June ad lib agreement. They all slap five.

GREG
Come on June. Let's shoot some hoop.

FISH
Man, this ain't "Hoop Dreams." Y'all short, and you ain't got no "D".

June and Greg ignore him and walk off.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (4)

A BASKETBALL, flying through the air. It sails to a basket and swishes the nets.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - MOMENTS LATER.

It's a serious pick-up game. Greg and June play on the same team. OTHER PLAYERS wait on the side. The game is fast and furious.

Cinny and Anetta talk nearby. Someone plays a RAP TUNE from a boom box.

A SERIES OF ANGLES: G takes the ball, shoots and misses. The other team grabs the rebound, and takes the ball up court and scores. June comes over to Greg.

JUNE

They got one up. We gotta hold them.

GREG

Cool. Let's do this.

Greg takes the ball down court. He notices Cinny watching. Greg showboats for her, dribbling around the court.

JUNE

Whatcha doin', G?!

Greg passes the ball to June. June jump fakes, and passes back to Greg. Greg is open.

SLOW MOTION: Greg looks at Cinny. Greg sees a defender coming. He jumps and takes a shot, but it's blocked. Greg falls hard on his ass. The other team gets the ball, easily scores and wins. June comes over and helps Greg up.

JUNE (cont'd)

Waited too long to shoot, G.

Greg looks back at Cinny. She's back into the book. Greg is embarrassed. Greg and June walk to the sidelines. A new team is coming out. A player taps June on the shoulder and says something to him.

JUNE (cont'd)

G, I'm gone play with these kids, okay?

GREG

Cool. I'll be over...

June is gone into the game. Greg heads for the sidelines. FAT KIDS, NERDS and other ASSORTED, NON-BALL PLAYING MUTHAFUCKAS are there. Greg takes his place among them.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

A BASKETBALL, flying through the air. PULL BACK TO REVEAL: Greg palming the ball, sailing through the air on his way to the basket.

GREG'S FEET sail over the dumbfounded heads of the competition. Greg slam dunks the ball. The other team gets the ball. We see that Greg is playing against the L.A. Lakers by himself.

SHAQUILLE O'NEAL, tries to inbound the ball. Greg intercepts it and slam dunks. This is repeated again. Shaq is dumbfounded.

GREG (cont'd)
You can't get by me. I'm like Visa,
nigga. I'm everywhere you wanna be!

Finally, the Lakers inbound and race down court. Greg runs to catch them.

Shaq rises for a dunk, only to find Greg already hanging from the backboard. Greg blocks the shot.

GREG (cont'd)
Get that weak shit outta here!

THE BALL sails through the air. Greg jumps down, and races up the court at lightning speed. Greg catches the ball he blocked, and slam dunks behind his head, on Shaq, BREAKING THE BACKBOARD and winning the game. Greg walks off the court to adoring fans. He gives Shaq a dap.

SHAQ
You bad, boy.

GREG
And you know that.

CUT TO:

12 INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.

Greg enters a PRESS CONFERENCE, wearing nothing but a towel. Behind him, we see other BARE-ASSED PLAYERS. Cameras flash, reporters yell at him, etc. Greg walks to a podium. The NBA COMMISSIONER takes the mic.

COMMISSIONER
Thank you all for coming. As you all know, each year, the NBA has a number one draft pick. Well, this year, we had a player so good, that the number "one" wasn't a good enough designation. So, I'd like to introduce the NBA's first "zero" draft pick-- Greg Reed!

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

APPLAUSE as Greg takes the mike.

GREG

Sorry to keep y'all waitin'. I had some light work on the court in there.

The gallery laughs.

GREG (cont'd)

I won't keep my fans waiting any longer. I'm by-passing college to go straight into the NBA!

The gallery explodes with questions and camera flashes.

REPORTER #1

How much are you going to be paid?

GREG

I told them to take whatever they paid Michael Jordan, and put another zero on the end of that muthafucka! Oops, can I say that on TV?

COMMISSIONER

A zero draft pick can say any muthafuckin' thing he wants, son.

More laughter from the crowd.

REPORTER #2

Greg, there was a rumor that you were going to stupid people's trade school. Is that true?

GREG

Well, one of my teachers said that, but... maybe he should explain it.

Greg points. Two BIG MEN bring in Mr. Shapic, wearing a straightjacket and a gag. Shapic jerks and tries to talk. The big men take him away.

REPORTER #3

Greg, are you a role model for kids?

GREG

Yes, I am. In fact, I want to say to all the kids out there, forget your damned parents, be like me.

REPORTER #1

Greg, what about the romantic rumors we heard about you and Tyra Banks.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

GREG

Well, Tyra was nice. You know, I hit that two, three-- hundred times, but it wasn't nothing serious, you know.

REPORTER #2

Well, are you seeing anyone currently?

GREG

Yeah, in fact, I'd like to announce that I'm getting married to my long-time woman, Cinny Hawkins. Cinny?

Cinny walks out, looking radiant. She hugs Greg, then goes to the mic.

CINNY

I just wanna watch Greg play ball, give him great sex whenever he wants it, and never get on his damn nerves.

Greg and Cinny look at each other adoringly, then smile for pictures as the cameras flash.

FLASH CUT TO:

13 INT. GYM - REALITY.

A basketball rolls over to Greg. Greg throws it back into play. Greg looks in the stands for Cinny, but she's gone.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. SCHOOL - LATER THAT DAY.

School is letting out. Greg, June and Fish walk by the picture of Dubois. He wears shades. The dialogue bubble now says: "Four weeks to the prom. Who got the liquor!"

JUNE

Y'all wanna come to the mall? One of them man-hating female book writers is gonna be there.

GREG

Why the hell would I want to see that?

JUNE

It'll be full of women. And after they dog out men, you can get with them.

FISH

I'll hang. We can all ride in my car. It's right over here.

ANGLE ON: A piece of shit car. They walk over to it.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

GREG

Naw, I gotta go to the Rib Shack. And I'd rather climb in a coffin than roll in that thing.

FISH

What? Ya, bus-ridin' muthafucka.

JUNE

Don't pay no attention to him, Fish. I'll roll with you. In fact, I'm gonna sell this shirt I'm wearing and buy you a new engine.

Greg and June laugh.

FISH

Kiss my shiny black ass. Listen to this engine roar.

Fish gets in and starts it up, The ENGINE CHOKES AND SPUTTERS. Fish gets out.

FISH (cont'd)

Just needs an adjustment.

Fish opens the hood. SMOKE COMES OUT. A black Lincoln SCREECHES up to them. Greg and June react. The car is pumping out a NASTY RAP TUNE.

LADENNIS MOCK, 20, and Z-BOY WHITE, 19, get out of the car. LaDennis is tall and lanky. Z-Boy is short and squat. They get out of the car. Fish keeps working in the background throughout.

LADENNIS

Yo, June. We need to talk.

JUNE

About what?

LADENNIS

Selling in my 'hood, that's what.

GREG

We don't know what you talking about, Dennis.

LADENNIS

My name is LaDennis, fool. Say it right.

JUNE

Look, LaDennis, I ain't gotta answer to you, aw'ight?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

Z-BOY

Naw, it ain't aw'ight. This is
Kenyatta's 'hood. You wanna sell a cough
drop up in here, you gotta ask
permission.

JUNE

So, why don't he come and talk to me?
You know why? Because he don't even know
you two fools exist--

KENYATTA (o.s.)

You almost right about that.

June and Greg turn to see KENYATTA, 35, a tall, menacing-
looking brother. He is impeccably dressed, and wears dark
shades.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

(to LaDennis and Z-Boy)

Let me holler at these two for a second.

Z-Boy and LaDennis walk off. Kenyatta walks up to a very
scared Greg and June.

JUNE

Yo, Mr. Kenyatta, I swear I didn't mean
to get into your business.

GREG

Yeah man, he didn't know, and I didn't
know. Hell, nobody knew nothing...

KENYATTA

Chill out, my brothas. What do you think
I am? Some kind of devil? Now, do I
look like a devil?

Kenyatta smiles like the Devil.

GREG

No, no.

JUNE

Face right out of heaven.

KENYATTA

(laughs)

You two are terrible liars. Look, I am a
very nonviolent man. But I know I got a
bad "notabriety".

GREG

Notoriety.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (3)

KENYATTA

What?

GREG

I think the word you mean is notoriety.

Kenyatta takes a step toward Greg.

KENYATTA

(pissed)

You know, I got me a degree when I was in the joint. You got a damned degree? No, you don't. So how you come off tryin' to correct a muthafucka?

JUNE

(scared)

Don't mind him. He's just, dumb, got a bad notabriety for being stupid.

KENYATTA

Yeah. Look here, June. I like you, brotha. You a hustler, like I was. But your hustle is weak. So, I got a proposition for you. Work for me, and I'll give you a cut of what you make.

JUNE

Kenyatta, I can't, brother. My moms would kill me.

KENYATTA

(suddenly hard)

Better her than me. I own this land. You don't work for me, you might as well put the undertaker on speed dial, nigga. 'Cause when I get done with you, they'll have to put what's left of your ass in a muthafuckin' "X-File".

Greg and June are terrified. They move back from Kenyatta. Suddenly, Kenyatta laughs.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

Loosen up, I'm just kiddin'. Did you like that "X-File" line? I just made that up.

GREG

(scared)

Great.

JUNE

(more scared)

The bomb.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (4)

KENYATTA

Look here June, give me all the weed you got on you.

June takes out a small bag and gives it to Kenyatta.

JUNE

Take it man, it's yours.

KENYATTA

No, it's yours. I'm buying it.

Kenyatta smells the weed then gives June some cash.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

See, that's what you'd make if you worked for me. And you wouldn't have to raid your mama's spice rack to do it.

JUNE

Damn, this is twice what I get.

GREG

Yeah, but he ain't selling weed. He's selling worse.

Kenyatta gives Greg an annoyed look.

KENYATTA

June, you got my word that weed is all you'll sell. Come talk to me when you ready. But leave your boy here behind. He's a real dubious type muthafucka. Peace.

Kenyatta gets back into the Lincoln. LaDennis and Z-Boy get in. They BURN RUBBER down the street. June is pensive, contemplating Kenyatta's offer. They hear an ENGINE COUGH TO LIFE.

FISH

Yeah! Y'all ready to roll?

The engine sputters and BLACK SMOKE comes from it. Fish fans the smoke. Greg and June walk off.

CUT TO:

15 INT. THE IRON PIMP - LATER.

Greg stands on a crowded, funky bus. A BUM coughs in his face. Greg grimaces.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. DALE'S RIB SHACK - ESTABLISHING.

It's a soul food restaurant in a business area. There are a lot of cars in the parking lot and people coming up to a take-out window.

CUT TO:

17 INT. DALE'S RIB SHACK - KITCHEN.

A SLAB OF RIBS is tossed on a grill.

Greg is cooking the ribs. He is sweaty, and stained with sauce and charcoal.

DALE COLLINS, 50, walks up to Greg. Dale is a big, hard-working, self-made man. He's wearing a greasy-looking print shirt.

DALE

Okay, Greg, I got it. You go and help bus the tables.

GREG

Okay. Mr. Collins, you said you wasn't gonna wear that shirt.

DALE

It's my lucky shirt, Greg.

GREG

But if you wear it everyday, it's a nasty, lucky shirt.

DALE

Don't you worry about what grown folks do, boy. Listen, Greg, I want you to put up some flyers at school. I'm running a senior prom special. All the ribs you can eat for only nineteen ninety-eight, get it?

Dale takes some ribs off the grill, and cuts them with a big knife.

GREG

I don't know, Mr. Collins...

DALE

Oscar Nigilson's burger joint is doing the same thing for prom night.

GREG

Nig burgers?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

DALE

Yes, and it's a good idea.

GREG

But a lot of kids wanna go to a fancy restaurant, you know?

DALE

Oh, I'm gone dress up the place. Got me some brand new vinyl seat covers. You just post them flyers, and work on getting some of your friends in here on prom night. I've got a lot of money riding on this.

GREG

Okay, I'll try.

DALE

Don't try. Do.

FOLLOWING Greg into the eating area. It's a comfortable, homey, greasy spoon. Greg is bussing a table, when he sees Cinny at a booth alone. Greg gets up his courage, then goes over to her.

GREG

Hey, Cinny.

CINNY

Greg, I didn't know you worked here.

Greg sits down with her.

GREG

Oh, Yeah, I'm the assistant manager. You want anything, I can hook you up.

CINNY

I'm fine thank you.

PHILLIP JACKSON, 18, handsome walks up.

PHILLIP

(to Cinny)

Who is this?

GREG

Oh, hey, I was just--

PHILLIP

I know what you was doing. You'd better step your greasy ass off.

CINNY

Phillip, quit it. Damn.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

Dale walks up.

DALE

Greg, what the hell are you doing?

(to Phillip)

Excuse him. Greg, get back to work bussing them tables.

PHILLIP

Yeah, get back to cleaning up shit.

CINNY

Phillip, could you just sit down, please?

Greg goes and busses a nearby table. He eavesdrops on Phillip and Cinny.

PHILLIP

So, are you going to the concert with me this weekend or not?

CINNY

I told you, I have a college orientation meeting.

PHILLIP

But I got tickets to see Usher. Row "C".

CINNY

Dang, I love Usher... no, I have to make this.

PHILLIP

Did I mention that I can get backstage passes, too?

CINNY

Maybe I can reschedule the trip...

PHILLIP

Yeah, see, now you talking, girl.

Cinny comes back to her senses.

CINNY

Wait, I can't go with you.

PHILLIP

What?

CINNY

Phillip, every time I have a college activity, you try to distract me. Why?

PHILLIP

That's not true.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

CINNY

Yes, it is. Look, I told you I'm cool with you not wanting to go to college, but don't try to stand in the way of what I want.

PHILLIP

I ain't doing that...

CINNY

Yes, you are--

Greg is into their fight. A man bumps him. Greg turns to see Kenyatta and his boys with some fine ass women. Startled, Greg knocks a tray off the table. GLASSES BREAK on the floor. Cinny and Phillip look his way. They all laugh as Greg cleans up.

KENYATTA

Watch yourself, Mr. Dubious. Wouldn't wanna get cut.

Kenyatta takes his crew to a table. Dale goes over to Greg.

DALE

Dammit, Greg, them glasses was new! I don't know why I let you work here...

Greg cleans up the mess. PUSH IN: on BBQ sauce. PULL BACK as A MAN man flies in frame and rolls on the floor.

Cinny and Phillip eat at a table. Kenyatta, LaDennis, and Z-Boy at a table talking. They watch the man tumble in.

THE DOOR. Greg walks in dressed like "The Terminator". He looks around. His eye GLOWS RED. The crowd gasps.

TERMINATOR'S POV: His cybernetic eye scans the place. It locks on Phillip, Readout says: "NIGGA IN MY WAY." It locks on Cinny. Readout says: "Damn, she's fine!" It locks on Kenyatta. The readout says: "LOWLIFE DRUG DEALER."

Greg moves to Kenyatta.

GREG

(Schwarzenegger)
All ugly muthafuckas must leave now.

KENYATTA

What the--
(to LaDennis and Z-Boy)
Kill his ass.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (4)

LaDennis and Z-Boy jump up, pull guns and fire, filling the room with GUNFIRE AND SMOKE. A beat, then Greg steps through the gunsmoke. He spits out some slugs.

GREG

Ouchie.

Greg snaps their necks. Kenyatta stands.

KENYATTA

I'm tired of people coming here from the future and fuckin' with a brother. I'm about to kick your "robotiniacal" ass.

Kenyatta pulls a gun. Greg takes a rib bone and shoves it through Kenyatta's throat.

GREG

(Schwarzenegger)

Never order the neckbones.

Kenyatta falls to his knees, about to die, then:

GREG (cont'd)

Wait.

Greg pulls out a dictionary. He flips to a page.

GREG (cont'd)

"Robotiniacal" is not a word.

Kenyatta screams in pain then dies. Greg walks over to a frightened Phillip. Cinny jumps between them.

CINNY

Don't. This is my boyfriend. Please don't beat him down, and make him cry like a bitch in front of all these people.

ANGLE ON: Phillip. He cries like a bitch.

GREG

Then come with me.

Cinny takes Greg's arm. Phillip tries to jump Greg from behind. Greg turns, and throws Phillip on a stove. SMOKE RISES as his ass cooks.

GREG (cont'd)

Too bad I don't eat pork.

Greg and Cinny walk off.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (5)

DALE (o.s.)

Greg!

FLASH CUT TO:

18 INT. DALE'S - REALITY.

Greg comes back to reality. He is still on his knees cleaning up.

DALE

Greg, finish this. I need this table.

Greg cleans up the mess. He hears ARGUING. He sees Cinny and Phillip are arguing. Greg is very happy. Cinny gets up and walks out on Phillip.

PHILLIP

Cinny, wait!

Phillip follows her. Phillip runs past Greg. Greg tries to trip Phillip, but slips, and falls into a bucket of barbecue sauce. It spills all over him. The crowd laughs. Phillip steps over Greg. He catches up with Cinny. Greg watches Phillip walk off with her. Dale walks up.

DALE

I don't know whether to fire you, or put your ass on special.

Dale tries to help Greg up, but they both fall back down. The crowd laughs again.

CUT TO:

19 INT. REED KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY.

The family is having breakfast. Greg comes down and sits.

LOUISE

Greg, I got you something.

Louise pulls out a thick book and places it on the table.

LOUISE (cont'd)

It's a book that teaches you how to fill out college applications.

Greg is silent.

WILLIE

Say something, boy.

JASON

(laughs)

Yeah, boy, answer yo' mama.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

LOUISE

Don't make me get you, Jason.
(to Greg)
Well?

GREG

Thanks, I'll look at it later.

LOUISE

We're trying to help you, Greg, but we can't do it if you won't help yourself.

GRAMPS

Somebody pass me the sausage.

Willie passes Gramps the sausage.

LOUISE

I want you to read that book, and apply to some colleges. Your father and I will help you where we can.

GREG

What about the prom?

LOUISE

College first, prom later.

GREG

But it's coming up and I need money.

Gramps spits out the sausage.

GRAMPS

This ain't sausage!

WILLIE

It's turkey sausage, Daddy.

LOUISE

I don't care if you miss the prom, as long as you take care of business.

GREG

Yo, I ain't missin' the prom.

GRAMPS

I'm a seventy-five year old black man from Alabama. I need pork!

WILLIE

Daddy, it's not good for you.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

GRAMPS

Pork got me to seventy-five, didn't it?
And what kinda sick muthafucka would make
sausage out of a damned turkey?!

WILLIE

Daddy, just try to eat it.

GRAMPS

No. I don't know why I gotta beg to get
food in this... fuck it.

Gramps gets up and walks out of the room.

WILLIE

Daddy, come back.
(calling)
Forget you then.

Willie goes back to his meal, then:

WILLIE (cont'd)

Damn.
(calling)
Daddy!

Willie goes after Gramps.

GREG

Why don't we just let him eat what he
wants?

LOUISE

Don't you worry about what we do. You
just get on them applications.

GREG

Maybe I don't wanna go to college. It
ain't for everybody.

LOUISE

It better be for you, or you can find a
new place to live.

GREG

Oh, so it's like that?

LOUISE

Yeah, it's like that. I've lived in this
neighborhood for thirty years, and I've
watched a hundred black boys go from
diapers, to worthlessness, to the
graveyard. That's not gonna happen to
you.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (3)

GREG

Why you coming down on me? I ain't no criminal.

LOUISE

Not being a criminal isn't an accomplishment. It's mandatory.

GREG

Don't I have something to say about what I do with my life?

LOUISE

No. Because you don't have the good sense God gave you. And your life is part of ours, that's why they call it a family. So, I say, our part of your life is taking its ass to college.

Greg eats in silence, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

20 INT. REED LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT EVENING.

Greg is at the table filling out an application. There's a knock on the door. Greg lets in Fish and June. They all ad lib hellos.

FISH

Yo, G, we all set for the prom.

GREG

Cool.

JUNE

But you still ain't got the 411 on the sneak party.

FISH

I'm gone get it today. Keep your stinky draws on.

JUNE

What you doing, G?

GREG

Just working on something. Yo, let's bounce up outta here.

Louise and Gramps enter. They all ad lib hellos.

LOUISE

Greg, I'm taking Daddy Reed to the pharmacy.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

GRAMPS

(to Fish)

I know you. You that boy with the good-looking Jamaican mama.

FISH

(proudly)

That's right.

GRAMPS

So, what the hell happened to you?

LOUISE

Daddy Reed!

GRAMPS

Am I supposed to pretend I don't see the boy's face?

LOUISE

Look, Greg is filling out his college applications. I don't want you two distracting him.

June and Fish laugh.

LOUISE (cont'd)

What's so funny? Greg is trying, which is more than I can say for you two. As a matter of fact, I will be on the phone with both your mamas tonight, reminding them that your sorry butts need some motivation.

June and Fish stop laughing.

GRAMPS

Let's go, woman.

LOUISE

Okay daddy, come on.

Louise and Gramps exit.

FISH

College applications. Aw man, you are kiddin' me? My grades are better than yours, and I'm a "class-skipplin'-non-homework-doin'" muthafucka.

GREG

I'm just doing it to get money.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

JUNE

All you did so far was get my old lady on my back.

June grabs the application.

GREG

Gimme that!

June passes it to Fish.

FISH

Listen to this, June. "What college means to me."

(reads)

College is a star, shining in the heavens, distant, but close enough to touch with your determination...

Fish and June laugh. Greg snatches the paper.

FISH (cont'd)

Yo, June, let's go out into "the heavens."

JUNE

Yes, maybe we can touch some booty with our determination.

They laugh at Greg. Greg is embarrassed. He grabs the book and papers. Greg throws the book in the trash and puts it out the back door.

GREG

Now, can we go?

June and Fish keep laughing. Greg walks out with them.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. SCHOOL - THE NEXT DAY.

Greg walks toward school. Suddenly, he hears LOUD R&B MUSIC. He turns and sees Shapic, driving up in a new convertible Mercedes SLK. The license plate reads: "SHAPIC 1". Shapic parks, puts up the retractable top and hops out, still bopping to the tune. He slaps five with a stunned Greg.

Shapic runs into the school. Greg lingers on the car, then follows him.

CUT TO:

22 INT. HALLWAY.

Cinny and Anetta talk. Anetta is upset.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

CINNY

Anetta, don't be upset, there's still a lot of time to find a prom date.

ANETTA

(worried)

I know. I'm not worried.

CINNY

Well, I might be going stag now that Phillip and me broke up. Look, if push comes to shove, we can go together. We don't need no men, right?

ANETTA

Right, girl.

They hug.

NEW ANGLE: Greg enters the hallway. He goes to a locker. June walks up with SHAHEEDAH, 17, a pretty young girl on his heels.

SHAHEEDAH

... you are taking me to that prom, June.

JUNE

For the last time, I'm not going with you, Shaheedah.

SHAHEEDAH

All right. But you'd better watch your back, my brotha...

Shaheedah curses June out. Greg sees Cinny with Anetta. Greg walks over to them.

GREG

Cinny, I gotta talk to you.

CINNY

Oh, hey, Greg. I almost didn't recognize you without barbecue sauce on your face.

GREG

(laughs)

Funny, funny.

ANETTA

Look, stop pushing up on my friend. We have sworn off men. So take your tired, discount player act on the road.

CINNY

Anetta, please.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

Anetta gives Greg a nasty look and walks off.

GREG
So, look, I wanted to know if--

CINNY
I'm not dating right now.

GREG
How do you know that's what I want?

CINNY
I'm sorry, that was really conceited of me. So, what do you want?

GREG
I want to go out with you.

CINNY
Later, Greg.

Cinny walks around him. Greg cuts her off again.

GREG
Wait, Cinny. Look, I respect your feelings.
(thinks fast)
I really don't have time to date either, you know, filling out college applications and all.

CINNY
(suddenly interested)
Oh, yeah, that's a lot of work. So, where are you applying?

GREG
Uh, you know, State... University, all of 'em.

CINNY
Oh you must be getting on late admission or wait-listed, huh?

GREG
(nervously)
Yeah, it's a trip. Whoo!

CINNY
So, how did your SAT's come out?

GREG
Good, good, big numbers. Cinny, I really could use someone to talk to.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (3)

GREG (cont'd)
 Everybody around here is always trying to
 distract a brother when he's trying to
 get his college on. They just make it--
 (fakes being upset)
 So hard.

CINNY
 You know, I guess we could go out
 somewhere... just as friends.

GREG
 Friends. That's cool.

CINNY
 Okay, call me.

Cinny writes out her phone number. Greg takes it.

CINNY (cont'd)
 Later.

Cinny walks away. Greg goes back over to June.

GREG
 Got them digits!

June and Greg high five.

JUNE
 There you go! I knew you could do it.
 Damn, another hundred women and you'll be
 just like me--

June ducks into a locker. LaRonda and Shaheedah walk by
 looking angry. They stop at Greg.

GREG
 He went that way. Get his ass!

The angry women run off. June comes out of the locker.

JUNE
 Damn women, stalking me.

Fish slams into them.

FISH
 Wha'sup, my niggas?!

JUNE
 Do you always have to do that?

FISH
 Yeah, it's my thang, you know.
 (beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (4)

FISH (cont'd)

I found out where Carl's sneak party is this week.

JUNE

Give up the 411 right now.

FISH

Nope, not until one of y'all gets me a date for the prom.

RITA, a plain-looking girl walks by. June reaches out and grabs her.

JUNE

Hey, Rita, my friend here needs a date to the prom.

Rita looks at Fish.

RITA

You have got to be kiddin', June. I can do better than that.

Rita walks off.

JUNE

Damn, I forgot they can see you. I might need do this at night.

FISH

Wha'sup with you, man? That heifer is ugly!

Rita turns around.

RITA

Excuse me, but I know I didn't hear you call me ugly heifer.

FISH

I'm sorry. I meant to say ugly bitch!

FISH'S POV: Rita reaches back, and punches, taking the screen:

TO BLACK

WE HEAR A LOUD SMACK.

GREG

Daaaaam.

JUNE

Daaaaam.

CUT TO:

23 INT. NIG BURGER - LATER.

Greg puts a coin in the jukebox. A ROMANTIC TUNE COMES ON. Greg crosses to Cinny at a booth in a hamburger joint. A SIGN on a wall says: "Oscar Nigilson's: Home of the Nig Burger." Cinny walks in and sits across from Greg.

CINNY
I don't like this place. Nig Burger.
That is so offensive.

GREG
But it's the owner's name, Oscar
Nigilson.

CINNY
So? He could've called it "Oscar"
Burger, or the "Igilson" burger
something.

GREG
We can go if you don't--

CINNY
No, no, it's okay. The man's got a right
to use his own name.

GREG
It's so cool to be here with you. I'm so
glad I got you.

CINNY
Got me? How have you got me?

GREG
Did I say that? 'Cause I would never say
that. I meant to say, I'm glad you
agreed to come here with me.

CINNY
Oh, okay. Thank you.

A WAITRESS walks up.

GREG
Yo, let me get a double Nig burger and a
coke.

Waitress looks at Cinny.

CINNY
I'll have some-- fries.

WAITRESS
(correcting)
Nig fries.

(CONTINUED)

CINNY
Right. And a shake.

WAITRESS
Little Nig or big Nig?

CINNY
Little--
(hates this)
Nig.

Waitress leaves.

GREG
So, I'm glad you could come.

CINNY
No problem. I've been dying to have an intelligent conversation about college.

GREG
Me too.

CINNY
You know, for a while, I didn't think I'd ever get in a college because of my problem.

GREG
Problem? What problem?

CINNY
Oh, I have a reading disorder, a form of dyslexia. Don't you see me reading with that plastic sheet over my books?

GREG
I thought it was some kind of secret, smart people's thing.

CINNY
No, it's a delineator. It helps my brain see the words in order. I hardly need it now, but I'm used to it.

GREG
Wow, I kinda have a hard time thinking of you as dumb.

CINNY
(a little upset)
I'm not dumb, Greg, I had a problem, and I got over it. I'm sure you have problems, too

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

GREG

I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way.

Another awkward moment. Waitress comes back.

WAITRESS

Double Nig burger, Nig fries, little Nig shake, and a Coke. Anything else?

GREG

Naw, we cool.

WAITRESS

You sure? We got Nig cobbler and banana Nig cake?

CINNY

(annoyed)

No, thank you.

GREG

So, you like this song? I love it.

CINNY

(all business)

So, where are you in your application process?

GREG

Uh, I'm at the essays, you know, where you tell what you like and don't like. So, tell me what do you like, baby?

CINNY

Lots of stuff. So, how about money? Did you get some kind of financial aid, or are you gonna do loans?

GREG

I got a few dollars saved. Speaking of which, the dollar show is close to here. We should go after dinner.

CINNY

Why do you keep changing the subject from college, Greg?

GREG

I'm just making conversation, trying to find out what you like.

CINNY

Greg, we're just friends, remember?

(CONTINUED)

GREG

But what if I don't want that?

CINNY

Why wouldn't you want to be my friend, Greg?

GREG

Because for a man, that's a sucka's job. You get all the bad, and none of the good.

CINNY

Then maybe I should just go. I don't wanna lead you on--

Cinny gets ready to leave. Greg stops her.

GREG

Wait, wait. Don't go. What if you and me created a new kind of friend?

CINNY

What do you mean?

GREG

Okay, close your eyes, and imagine for a second.

CINNY

Greg...

GREG

Please. I'm good at this.

Cinny closes her eyes, but is still impatient.

GREG (cont'd)

Now, imagine your man, someone you like, you hug, kiss, you might even love him. Okay, now imagine a friend. He's cool, he's nice, but you keep him on that non-romantic tip.

CINNY

(laughs a little)
All right.

GREG

Now, imagine me, I'm more than the friend, but less than the boyfriend. You don't kiss me, but you might, you don't hug me, but you could. I'm not your man, but not just your friend either. I'm your... "Could-Be-Man".

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (4)

Cinny laughs again and opens her eyes.

CINNY

Okay Greg, I see your point. No one can predict the future.

GREG

That's all a brother is trying to say.

CINNY

Listen, I'm sorry for being so hard, I'm going through some stuff right now.

GREG

I know how it is.

CINNY

You should eat your food before it gets cold.

GREG

Oh, by the way, a "Could-Be-Man" only picks up half the check.

They laugh and eat.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. REED HOUSE - LATER THAT EVENING.

Greg is frantically digging through the garbage can at his house, looking for the college book. He finds it. He wipes off some garbage, then heads for the house.

CUT TO:

25 INT. REED DINING ROOM - LATER.

Greg is reading the college book, and taking notes on a note pad. Willie, Gramps, and Jason come in.

WILLIE

You still doing homework?

GREG

Nope. I'm filling out these college applications.

WILLIE

Good boy. Now I don't have to go to jail for killing you.

GRAMPS

(to Willie)

I thought you said the boy was stupid.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

WILLIE

I said he needed to get his grades up.

JASON

I don't know why he's doing it. Even if he gets in, he'll still be stupid.

WILLIE

Shut up, Jason.

GREG

Yeah, shut up. I'll fit right in.

JASON

No, you won't. College is for rich, smart kids. You poor and dumb.

GREG

You just jealous 'cause I'm the man.

Jason points to Greg's essay.

JASON

You spelled education wrong.

Greg looks at the paper, and erases quickly. Jason laughs.

WILLIE

Come on, both of y'all. Get out.

Willie takes Gramps and Jason out. Greg gets up and walks down a hallway.

26 INT. DORM HALLWAY.

Greg struts down the hallway past dorm rooms. The rooms are sorry looking cubby holes. Students sit inside, crowded together like sardines. Greg laughs at them. Greg gets to a room that has: "GREG'S CRIB" on the door. He goes inside.

CUT TO:

27 INT. GREG'S CRIB - STILL TRIPPIN'.

Greg walks inside. It's a huge, expensively decorated condo. There's a party going on. MUSIC PLAYS. People dance. They all wear T-SHIRTS WITH GREG'S FACE ON THEM.

D.J.

Give it up for the man himself, Greg Reed!

Loud applause for Greg. He dances with a honey, then walks to a corner of the room. A LACKEY comes over. He helps Greg out of his letterman jacket, and into a silk smoking jacket.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

LACKEY

It's time for you to bestow your wisdom
on those less cool than you.

GREG

Yes, yes, bring them in.

Greg sits in a big leather chair. Lackey brings in some rich-looking kids.

LACKEY

These rich boys need assistance with
their grades.

RICH BOY #1

Please, we have money, but we're fuck ups
who screwed our whole semester away,
thinking we were better than you. Help
us, please.

GREG

I shouldn't, but I'm feeling generous.
Give them my butt to kiss first.

Lackey pulls out a statue of a butt. The rich boys
reluctantly kiss it. Greg pulls out a laptop computer. He
hits keys.

GREG (cont'd)

I broke the school's computer code.
Which was easy, since I invented it.
There, you all got C's.

RICH BOY #1

C's?!

GREG

You got a problem with that? I can erase
it.

Greg raises a finger over a button.

RICH BOY #1

No, no. Thank you, thank you.

The rich boys bow to Greg as they leave.

GREG

Next.

Lackey brings in a Professor. He rolls in a chalkboard with
a complex math equation on it.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

PROFESSOR

Greg, I can't crack this math problem.
I'll lose my million dollar grant if I
don't solve it today.

GREG

Look, Professor, I already told you the
relative state of time is proportional to
the derivative value of matter over
energy. What you want from a brother?

PROFESSOR

I know, but I'm so close.

GREG

Dang.

Greg gets up and goes to the board. He yawns, then marks off
several values. He writes a new one and checks it.

GREG (cont'd)

There, satisfied?

PROFESSOR

Yes! Thank you! Thank you!

Professor rolls the board out. Lackey returns with a line of
young women.

LACKEY

The sororities want you to pick their
spring pledges, Your Flyness.

GREG

Well, well, now this is a gig I can get
into. Bring 'em on.

Lackey brings in the girls one at a time.

GREG (cont'd)

(dismissive)

Too much booty. Pass... Not enough
booty. Pass... belly button ring is
crooked, pass...

Greg sees Cinny. He gets up and walks over to her.

GREG (cont'd)

You.

CINNY

Oh, my God. I didn't think you'd
remember me after coming to college and
blowing up like you did.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (3)

GREG
Cinny, how could I ever forget you?
Everybody out!

Lackey takes the women away. Greg takes Cinny to the dance floor. A ROMANTIC SONGS starts, Greg and Cinny dance. A SINGER begins to blow.

GREG (cont'd)
(irritated)
Wait, stop the music.

Music stops.

GREG (cont'd)
(to Lackey)
Who the hell is this?
LACKEY
A singer, Your "Jiggy-Ness".
GREG
Not good enough for my woman here.

Greg pulls out a remote and hits a button.

GREG (cont'd)
Gotta do everything myself.

ROMANTIC MUSIC STARTS AGAIN. A door opens and USHER FLOATS IN, singing. The crowd GASPS in awe. Usher smiles a killer smile. Greg nods to him. They slap five.

GREG (cont'd)
Thanks, Ush. You the one, baby.
USHER
Come on. You know it's all you, G.
GREG
Yeah, it is, ain't it?
USHER
(to the house)
I want to thank G, my friend and vocal coach for calling me. I'll have to cancel a gig at the Forum, but how often do I get to play G's Crib?
GREG
Not often enough.
USHER
This one's for you, G.

Usher serenades Greg and Cinny as they dance.

FLASH CUT TO:

28 INT. REED DINING ROOM - REALITY.

Greg comes back. He smiles and keeps working. Willie comes back in.

WILLIE
Proud of you, son.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

Willie leaves. Greg smiles.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. STREET - SAME TIME.

A darkened street in the 'hood. June stands on a corner. A car rolls up. June waves it on. Another car rolls up.

NEW ANGLE a dark, tinted window rolls down, revealing the smiling face of Kenyatta. Kenyatta opens the door and June gets in.

CUT TO:

30 INT. A STUDY HALL - DAY

Greg and Cinny study together. Greg tries to hug her. Cinny moves his hand away, pointing to a MATH BOOK. Cinny works on a math problem. Greg is reading the same math book, but inside there's a VIBE MAGAZINE.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY.

Phillip talks to Cinny who looks annoyed. Greg walks up and sits next to Cinny defiantly. Philip walks off upset. Greg smiles and tries to embrace Cinny she playfully avoids him as she gets up.

NEW ANGLE: Shapic talks to three female teachers, who are obviously charmed by him. Greg and Cinny walk by. Greg smiles at a stunned Shapic.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. SCHOOL.

Greg and Cinny sit at a table. Greg tries to kiss her, she playfully pushes a French tape into his lips. Cinny puts her tape into a player. Greg takes the French tape, then switches it with a tape by "Masta P".

CUT TO:

33 EXT. A PARK - NIGHT.

Greg and Cinny walk along a beautiful shoreline. Ships sail along lazily in the background.

GREG

So, you going to the Sneak Party? I know where it is.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

CINNY
No, I don't think so. People get drunk
and have sex at those parties.

GREG
(eager)
Yeah, you wanna go with me?

CINNY
Greg...

GREG
Okay, okay, why don't we meet there?

CINNY
I'll think about it.

They walk on, then stop, leaning against a tree.

GREG
See that big ship? My father works at
the docks loading machine parts on boats
like that.

GREG (cont'd)
When I was ten, my Daddy took me on board
a ship. It was huge. There were all
these brothers there, but they spoke
French. I had never seen anything like
that. It made me feel--

CINNY
Small?

GREG
Yeah, like there was a lot I didn't know.
My Dad is cool and all, but he never
thinks of how those little machine parts
get to go places he'll never see. But I
do. When I see a ship, I wonder where
it's headed, and if I'll ever get there.

Cinny looks at Greg silently, seeing more in him now. Cinny nudges closer to Greg. He puts his arm around her. She does not resist.

DISSOLVE TO:

34 EXT. STREET - EVENING.

Greg walks up to a mail box. He lifts several envelopes to the chute and stops.

ANGLE ON ENVELOPES: We see the names of several colleges,
"USC", "UCLA", etc.,.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

Greg looks up and utters a silent prayer. He puts the envelopes in the box.

CUT TO:

35 INT. MAILBOX - SAME TIME.

From inside the box we see Greg's face. He drops in the letters and closes the chute, taking the screen:

TO BLACK

36 EXT. A BIG HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT.

It's a big house in a posh neighborhood. Cars line the street.

Fish's car pulls up, rattling and spewing smoke. We see Greg, June and Fish inside. Fish is at the wheel. We see kids all over the lawn, making out.

The fellas walk to the front of the house. A RAP TUNE comes from inside, along with the VOICES OF THE PARTIERS.

A TALL WOMAN stands at the door, holding a clipboard. The fellas walk up to him.

TALL WOMAN

You on the list?

FISH

List? What list?

GREG

Since when they got a list for the sneak party?

TALL WOMAN

Since now.

FISH

Let me see that list.

TALL WOMAN

Fuck you.

FISH

Wha--? You talking to me?

The Tall Woman walks up to Fish. She towers over him. He looks up at her, a little nervous. June steps in.

JUNE

(to woman)

Yo, let me talk to you.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

June takes the Tall Woman aside and talks to her. She smiles. They walk back.

JUNE (cont'd)
Come on, y'all.

They all go inside.

CUT TO:

37 INT. HOUSE PARTY.

The fellas step in. A SERIES OF ANGLES show that the party is THUMPIN'! People dance, drink, smoke, kiss and grope like crazy!

GREG
What did you say to her?

JUNE
I asked her to the prom.

Greg and June share a laugh.

FISH
Fishman in da house!

Fish jumps into the dancing crowd, slamming into people, dancing crazy. Greg walks away from June. June spots Dennia dancing with a homeboy. June grabs a girl and dances over to them. Dennia smiles, doing a sexy dance for June. June reacts with lusty interest. In a fluid move June grabs the homeboy and switches dance partners. Before the homeboy can react, June is gone with Dennia in the thick crowd.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. BACKYARD.

Greg walks out. There are more couples kissing and groping. Cinny stands by the pool with a SLEAZY-LOOKING BROTHER, who is hitting on her.

SLEAZY BROTHER
...I swear, Puff Daddy is my cousin. I'm the one that came up with the whole "Puff" thang.

CINNY
Look, I'm waiting for somebody.

SLEAZY BROTHER
(upset)
Oh, so you too good for a brother!
(beat, then sleazy)
Damn, you fine.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

Greg walks up.

GREG
What's up, Cinny?

Cinny walks away from the Sleazy Brother to Greg.

CINNY
Greg, thank God.

SLEAZY BROTHER
Oh, so it's like that, huh? Well, don't expect to be in my next video.

Sleazy Brother walks off. Greg sits with her. Greg takes moment, thinking about what he has to say.

GREG
Cinny, I was wondering if you'd go to the prom with me.

CINNY
I don't know. Dating always screws things up. Can't you just keep being my Could-Be-Man?

Greg can feel her slipping away. He's desperate. Only one thing to he can do:

GREG
I got into college.

CINNY
What? Greg, that's great! Congratulations.

Cinny hugs him.

CINNY (cont'd)
Where did you get in?

GREG
UCLA.

CINNY
Tell me all about it.

GREG
Not much to tell. I'm just in there, you know. Look, Cinny, I'm so hyped about this good news. My whole life has changed. All I need now is you to make it perfect, Please, don't turn me down for the prom.

Greg looks at her with love in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

CINNY

Greg... Okay, I'll go with you.

Greg kisses her passionately.

CUT TO:

39 INT. HOUSE.

A BOTTLE OF CHEAP LIQUOR. Fish is spiking the punch. He takes a big cup and walks over to VANESSA, 18, a young girl who appears to be drunk.

FISH

Here you go, baby.

Vanessa drinks. She frowns at the harsh taste.

VANESSA

Damn-- that's good.

Greg walks up.

FISH

Yo, Greg. Where's Cinny?

GREG

She's using the bathroom.

FISH

(sotto)

Yo, I think I got me a hot one. You got an extra condom for my girl here?

VANESSA

Hey, your friend here gotta go. I ain't down for no freaky deaky.

FISH

He ain't going with us, baby.

Greg takes out two condoms, a new one, and an old, rumpled one. Greg passes the old one to Fish. Fish looks at it.

FISH (cont'd)

What's this, the first one ever made?

GREG

I'm not giving you my new one.

FISH

Oh, you saving that one for Cinny. I'm on it, brotha.

Fish gives Greg a dap. Greg plays along.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

VANESSA

Hey Fish, I changed my mind. I don't feel like it.

FISH

No, no, baby. Don't be like that.

VANESSA

Why they call you Fish, anyway?

FISH

`Cause I gotta a whale-sized dick.

GREG

Actually, it's because when we was little...

FISH

Yo, G, shut up, man...

GREG

His daddy works in the fish market, and he used to always put fish sandwiches in his lunch. Shit would smell up the classroom.

VANESSA

(laughs)

Damn, that's funny.

FISH

G, I'm gonna kill you.

VANESSA

(to Fish)

That's a really cute story. Let's go, baby.

FISH

(to Greg)

I love you, man.

Fish and Vanessa start upstairs.

GREG

Hey, where's June?

FISH

With Dennia. Come on.

Greg, Fish and Vanessa go upstairs. Fish goes to a door and opens it. Fish and Greg look inside the room. WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF JUNE AND DENNIA MAKING LOVE.

JUNE (o.s.)

Yo, close that door!

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

Fish shuts the door. Fish looks lustfully at Vanessa. They start kissing. Cinny comes out of a bathroom.

CINNY
Hey, Greg, you ready?

GREG
(faking it)
Yeah, baby, I'm ready.

CINNY
Come on, then.

Fish pushes 'em up for Greg, and goes into a room with Vanessa.

CINNY (cont'd)
I don't know why I come to these parties.

GREG
Me either.

Greg takes Cinny's hand and walks off with her.

CUT TO:

40 EXT. A HOUSE - NIGHT.

Cinny and Greg walk up to the house, holding hands. They get to the front porch. They kiss.

CINNY
Greg...

GREG
Yeah.

CINNY
I had a good time.

GREG
(guilty)
So did I.

CINNY
You know, I used to think I was different from everybody in school. All I the guys I meet have one thing on their mind, and it sure as hell ain't college. But since I met you, I don't feel so alone anymore. I feel better about myself. I'm just glad I found someone who feels the same way I do.

Greg knows he's in deep shit now. He struggles with the truth, but:

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

GREG

Me too.

They kiss again.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. DU BOIS HIGH SCHOOL - TWO WEEKS LATER.

Greg and Fish walk by DuBois. The dialogue bubble now says: "Two weeks to the prom. Where da limo at!" June walks up with Denna. He kisses her and she walks off.

JUNE

Ain't nobody got game like me.

GREG

Hey, whassup Snap?

June reacts, terrified. Greg and Fish laugh.

JUNE

Man, don't doing that.

Mr. Shapic walks up to them.

MR. SHAPIC

Fellas, if you're planning to attend Career Day, it's in the opposite direction.

FISH

Yo, they got a professional rapper in there? `Cause that's what I'm gonna be.

MR. SHAPIC

Really? Did you know that a rapper has to learn traditional forms of rhyme, internal rhyming, syntax, and basically everything you were supposed to learn in English?

FISH

(beat)

I'll just be a manager, then.

JUNE

They got a "Lovers" booth? `Cause that's my career.

MR. SHAPIC

Yeah, you could make a lot of money doing that. A good male prostitute can really get paid.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

JUNE

Prostitute? I ain't no--

MR. SHAPIC

Selling sex for money, that's prostitution. June, I'm sure you'll be the best ho on the corner. So, Greg, what about you?

GREG

I don't know.

MR. SHAPIC

Well, then there are some options you might want to check out at Career Day.

GREG

I'll be a teacher if I can have a car like yours.

MR. SHAPIC

Teachers do well in the long run. And my car, if you must know, was picked out by a young lady I'm seeing.

FISH

Yeah? Who?

MR. SHAPIC

As I recall, her name is "Ms. None-Of-Your-Damned-Business." What I do is not important. What you do with your life is. I'm headed toward the future. Who's coming with me?

Shapic smiles and walks off.

JUNE

Let's skip next period.

FISH

Cool. I'm down.

GREG

Not me. I'm-- meeting Cinny in the back of the school.

FISH

Damn, you can't get enough of that, can you? You should have seen Shaun's face when I told him you knocked boots with Cinny at the sneak party...

Greg grabs Fish by the collar.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

GREG

What?! Fish, you dumb-ass mutha--

Fish grabs Greg back. They tussle. June breaks it up.

JUNE

G, what's wrong with you?!

Greg realizes that he overreacted. He takes a step away, then:

GREG

Nothing. I just don't want it getting back to Cinny. She's sensitive about that.

(beat, then to Fish)

I'm sorry, man.

FISH

Me too, man.

They slap five, then embrace.

JUNE

Okay. Y'all two girls in love again?

Greg and Fish smack June upside the head. They walk off. Greg waits a moment, then goes off toward the gym.

CUT TO:

42 EXT. SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER.

June and Fish walk out. June sees Kenyatta's black Lincoln parked at a curb.

JUNE

Yo, Fish I'll catch up with you, man.

FISH

Cool.

Fish walks off with some other kids. June goes over to the Lincoln. Kenyatta rolls down the window.

KENYATTA

June, my brotha. Got a special package for you.

Kenyatta shows him some white powder. He slips it into a pouch.

JUNE

Yo, that ain't weed. You said--

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

KENYATTA

I know what I said but things change.
People grow up. You got a problem with
that?

JUNE

Kenyatta... I can't do that, man.

KENYATTA

You know weed ain't legal, either. What
the fuck did you think this was?

JUNE

I thought it was business, but I ain't
down for this, man.

KENYATTA

Okay, cool. I thought you was a man, but
you still a little boy. This is a man's
game, so take your young ass on.

Kenyatta turns away from June, and rolls up the window. June
walks off.

CUT TO:

43 INT. CAR.

Kenyatta sits in the back with a look of malevolence on his
face.

KENYATTA

Give him a few days to stop watching his
back, then bring his ass to me.

LaDennis and Z-Boy nod.

CUT TO:

44 INT. GYM - SAME TIME

It's a big Career Day. The gym has been transformed with
booths and tables everywhere.

A SERIES OF ANGLES show the various professionals
represented. Greg walks in, feeling awkward. He stops by a
booth. Mr. Shapic walks up.

MR. SHAPIC

I was holding this for you.

He hands Greg a folder with his name on it.

GREG

How did you know I would come?

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

MR. SHAPIC
Just a feeling.

Anetta walks up to the booth unseen by Greg.

MR. SHAPIC (cont'd)
Look, I know you told me college isn't in your future, but there are a lot of other alternatives here.

GREG
Thanks, man. I'll look around.

Greg starts to walk off.

MR. SHAPIC
And Greg?

GREG
Yeah?

MR. SHAPIC
Congratulations on being with Ms. Hawkins. That's a good sign for you.

GREG
Thanks.

Greg walks away. Anetta watches him with anger in her eyes. Greg stops at the law school booth.

LAW BOOTH SPEAKER
...so, all you need is a three point five G.P.A. and...

Greg moves on to the medical school booth.

MEDICAL BOOTH SPEAKER
... of course, a high SAT score is necessary to...

Greg moves on. He stops at the business school booth.

BUSINESS BOOTH SPEAKER
...an MBA is still a valuable degree.
(to Greg)
You, what's your grade point?

Greg panics, he turns and walks away. He hears laughter behind him. Greg stops by the Army booth.

ARMY BOOTH SPEAKER
...the Army makes men. You can be all you a can be, and you don't have to be a genius to take orders...

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2)

Greg watches the speaker. PAN OVER. The gym slowly turns into A JUNGLE

45 EXT. JUNGLE - TRIPPIN'

Greg, June, and Fish crouch behind a bush. June and Fish look scared.

GREG

We need to recon this area to make sure it's safe.

JUNE

We need to have our asses somewhere else.

A TWIG SNAPS.

FISH

Did y'all hear that?! I heard something! Let's get out of here.

GREG

I'm sure it's nothing. Give me those night vision goggles.

June gives the goggles to Greg. Greg puts them on.

NIGHT VISION. Greg sees THE ENEMY all around them holding guns and advancing.

GREG (cont'd)

Damn, fellas we're surrounded. Look, we have to strike first. While we have the element of surprise--

Greg takes off the goggles to find them gone. There's a NOTE. Greg picks it up.

GREG (cont'd)

(reading)

Dear Sarge: Peace out! Looks like it's just me and them.

Greg takes on a intense look. ACTION MUSIC. Greg rips off his shirt and ties a bandana to his head. He takes a rope, shoots it over a tree branch, and hoists himself into the air as the enemy attacks.

Greg spins around with a yell, shooting the enemy with his machine gun like the dumbasses they are. They fall dead. Greg is shot by a soldier. He falls from the rope and hits the ground. He gets up and throws a knife into the last soldier, killing him. Greg looks around at the carnage. He notices his arm.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Greg's arm has been ripped from the socket. ANGLE ON: his severed arm still on the rope.

GREG (cont'd)

Damn. I hate that.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

Greg picks up his gun and walks off, leaving the arm.

CUT TO:

46 INT. A STAGE - STILL TRIPPIN'.

Greg stands before the President. MILITARY TYPES are in the background.

PRESIDENT

Greg, it's my honor to give you the The Purple Heart, The Congressional Medal of Honor, and these unreleased CD's by Tupac and The Notorious B.I.G.

The President pins on the medals. He tries to give the CD's to Greg's missing arm. They drop to the floor. Greg picks them up, then takes the podium.

GREG

I'd like to thank everybody, especially the President-- you my nigga. And as soon as you retire, I will run for your office.

More applause. Cinny walks in.

CINNY

Wait, hold up. This man is a fake. He didn't go to college.

The audience gasps.

GREG

Cinny, I didn't mean it.

CINNY

The only thing worse than a liar, is one with medals he doesn't deserve.

Cinny, the President, and the other military men rip off the medals, and take the CD's. Greg fights them.

GREG

No, don't take Tupac...!

FLASH CUT TO:

47 INT. CAREER DAY - REALITY.

Greg comes back. He is unsettled. He walks a few steps to the Trade School booth. A STUPID LOOKING MAN smiles, and waves at him. Greg turns, and walks out quickly.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. SCHOOL - THE NEXT DAY.

Greg waits outside the school. He checks his watch. Kids pass by. Greg checks his watch again.

DISSOLVE TO:

49 EXT. SCHOOL - EVEN LATER.

A car pulls up. We see it's filled with girls. Cinny and Anetta get out of it, and walk over to Greg.

GREG

Cinny...

The smile melts from Greg's face as he sees Cinny's hurt and angry expression.

CINNY

Why did you tell that lie on me? It's all over school how you screwed me at that party, like some ho.

Greg is in anguish. He's been busted.

GREG

I didn't lie. It was my boys, they got it all wrong. I'd never start a rumor about you.

CINNY

Fine, that's cool. So, when do you start at the UCLA?

GREG

Uh, you know, on the first day.

ANETTA

Stop frontin'. I heard you at Career Day.

GREG

Anetta stay out of this, please. Cinny, it's not like it seems.

CINNY

So, you did intend to go to college when I met you?

GREG

No, but after a while--

CINNY

And you did get into UCLA?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

GREG
No, I didn't.

CINNY
And you didn't use these damned lies to get next to me and get me to drop my defenses?

GREG
Cinny, I--

CINNY
Look at me, Greg. Look at me, and say that's not what you did.

Greg looks at her, then his eyes drop in shame.

CINNY (cont'd)
I thought you were special, Greg, better than this kind of shit.

Cinny walks away. Greg glares at Anetta as she leaves. Greg watches, broken-hearted, as Cinny gets in the car and drives away.

CUT TO:

50 INT. DALE'S - LATER THAT EVENING.

Greg walks in to the crowded restaurant. He finds an angry Dale, wearing the same greasy shirt, and holding a stack of fliers.

DALE
What the fuck is this, Greg?

GREG
Oh man, I forgot to put up the flyers.

DALE
Did you know that Oscar Nigilson put up flyers too? Did you know that he's sold out for the prom already?

GREG
Look, don't sweat me, I'm having a bad day.

DALE
Well, it just got worse. You're fired.

Greg is shocked, then tears off the apron.

GREG
I don't need this damned job anyway.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

Greg walks to the door.

DALE
You're just like all these other fools.
Lazy and stupid, ain't gonna never amount
to nothing! Get out!

Greg turns on Dale and gets in his face.

GREG
Wash your shirt!

Greg leaves. Customers laugh at Dale. Dale walks off,
embarrassed.

CUT TO:

51 INT. REED LIVING ROOM - LATER.

Greg comes in, looking down. Louise and Willie wait for him
with smiles on their faces. Jason and Gramps wait, too.
Louise holds four envelopes.

LOUISE
Greg, honey, these envelopes are from
college!

WILLIE
Go on, son, open them.

Greg looks at them, still saddened. He mechanically takes an
envelope and opens it.

GREG
UCLA said no.

The family reacts, disappointed. Greg takes the second one
and opens it.

GREG (cont'd)
I didn't get in USC, either.

The family reacts, disappointed again.

LOUISE
Here, let me open this one.

Louise takes an envelope and opens it. Her face turns sour.

LOUISE (cont'd)
What do these people know?!

GREG
Which school was that?

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

LOUISE
Pepperdine.

Greg takes the last envelope and opens it.

GREG
Four for four. Howard said no, too.

WILLIE
Don't worry, son, there's still one more school you haven't heard from.

LOUISE
Yes, which one was that?

GREG
Morehouse. It's down south somewhere.

WILLIE
Right, I'm sure they'll come through.

GREG
No, they won't. I'm stupid just like you said, Daddy.

Willie moves closer to Greg.

WILLIE
Don't you ever let me hear you say that. We don't give up in this family.

GREG
Well, I'll be the first.

Willie is about to say something, but Louise stops him. She takes Willie and leaves. Gramps goes over to Greg.

GRAMPS
Forget `em, son. I didn't go to no college, and look at me.

Greg reacts, even more depressed. Gramps leaves. Jason goes over to Greg.

JASON
I didn't want you to leave anyway.

Jason hugs his brother, and leaves. Greg sits in his pain.

CUT TO:

52 EXT. SCHOOL - THE NEXT DAY.

Kids are leaving for home. Greg walks out of school, looking pathetic. Greg sits on a wall. He watches Cinny talk with Anetta and her friends. He gets up to go to her.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

Cinny gives Greg a "Don't even think about it" look. Greg sits his ass back down.

PUSH IN TO: Greg's sad, frustrated face.

LOUISE (v.o.)

You better stop that daydreamin', boy!

WILLIE (v.o.)

Life is real, you'd better get real with it.

DALE (v.o.)

You lazy and stupid!

JUNE (v.o.)

Fuck college, man.

MR. SHAPIC (v.o.)

It's time for hard choices...

CINNY (v.o.)

Most kids think they'll never get out of this neighborhood...

Greg closes his eyes, concentrates, and:

FLASH CUT TO:

53 INT. A HOUSE IN THE PROJECTS - TRIPPIN'.

Greg is now a poverty-stricken welfare dad. He sits on a sofa and drinks beer and channel surfs.

LAQUELSALIKKA, 30ish, overweight, comes in with a toddler under her arm. She wears a big tent dress, and her hair is in curlers.

LAQUELSALIKKA

Greg, the kids need food.

GREG

Then go get `em some, Laquelsalikka.

LAQUELSALIKKA

I'm serious, Greg. They hungry. You need to get yo' sorry ass up and do something 'bout it.

GREG

(re: TV)

Look at this. Terry McMillan done wrote another book doggin' brothers. She don't know nothing about men.

(disdain)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

GREG (cont'd)
 "Waiting to Exhale." I'm writing me a
 book, it's called "Breathe, Bitch!"
 (laughs)

LAQUELSALIKKA
 Greg, you gambled with my county check,
 and now we ain't got nothing to eat.

GREG
 Hey, June and them niggas cheated me. I
 rolled a six and they lied and said it
 wasn't. I know what five plus two is.

LAQUELSALIKKA
 Seven, dumb-ass! Listen, I ain't tryin'
 to hear none of that. Your kids, Punia
 and Roloffo need some food.

GREG
 The kids? You the biggest thing in this
 house. If you stop eatin' so damn much,
 we'd have some food.

LAQUELSALIKKA
 Don't start with me...

GREG
 Cut some of that meat hangin' off your
 arms. Fry that shit up with some eggs or
 somethin'.

LAQUELSALIKKA
 I'll kick your lazy behind.

GREG
 Right. I'll just run up a coupla stairs.
 Your big ass will never make it.

Laquelsalikka and Greg ad lib arguing. THE DOORBELL RINGS.
 Laquelsalikka stops and goes to the door. Laquelsalikka opens
 the door to reveal RENEE, a young woman.

LAQUELSALIKKA
 What the hell do you want?

RENEE
 I wanna see Greg.

LAQUELSALIKKA
 What do you want with my man?

RENEE
 Your man got me pregnant.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

LAQUELSALIKKA

What?!

Renee barges in. Laquelsalikka follows.

RENEE

There you are, you sorry-ass...

LAQUELSALIKKA

(to Renee)

Hold up, hold up! Don't be talking to my man like that.

(beat then, to Greg)

Muthafucka, what's your problem?! My stuff ain't good enough for you?

GREG

Hell, no! You so fat, I'd need a damned road map and some blood hounds to find "your stuff!" And look at the body on Renee here. You know I had to hit that!
(laughs)

LAQUELSALIKKA

Get out. I want you out of my house.

GREG

Cool, I'll just go live with Renee.
Right, baby?

RENEE

Wrong. I don't want you neither. And gimme my bus pass back.

Both women start to yell at Greg. The baby CRIES LOUDLY. Greg ignores them, and keeps changing channels on the TV. Suddenly, he stops.

ANGLE ON: TV: CINNY is on TV with OPRAH WINFREY. Laquelsalikka and Renee's ANGRY VOICES FADE as Greg is drawn to the TV.

CINNY

...and I'm happy to say I have a good job, lots of money, and handsome men with new cars and muscles.

OPRAH

So whatever happened to all those kids who never got it together?

CINNY

I don't know. But I bet they're sorry now.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (3)

OPRAH

There you have it. Cinny Hawkins,
 president of Cinny Industries talks about
 all the losers she left in the ghetto.
 Thanks for coming, Cinny.

CINNY

Thank you, Oprah.
 (to Greg)
 And thank you, Greg, for making me dump
 your sorry behind! Excuse me, Oprah.

OPRAH

It's okay, girl. Oprah knows.

Oprah and Cinny laugh at Greg from the TV. Greg is frightened
 and shocked at what he sees. He gets off the sofa and heads
 for the door. Laquelsalikka grabs him.

LAQUELSALIKKA

Where you think you goin'?

Renee grabs Greg, too.

RENEE

He ain't going nowhere. My baby needs
 him.

Renee's STOMACH STARTS TO GROW right where she stands.

GREG

No... let me go!

The two women pull Greg as he tries to run. They force him
 to the floor, ripping at his clothes.

FISH (o.s.)

G! G!...

FLASH CUT TO:

54 EXT. SCHOOL - REALITY.

Greg comes to and finds Fish in his face. Fish is holding
 Greg's shoulders and shaking him.

FISH

Wake up, boy! June is in trouble! I saw
 Kenyatta's boys grab him right off the
 street.

GREG

Kenyatta! Why would he--?

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

FISH
June's been selling for them. I told
that fool you don't just quit Kenyatta.

GREG
Come on. Let's go get him back.

FISH
You crazy? We got to call the cops.

GREG
This is our friend, we're talking about.
I'm going. You do what you want.

Greg walks off. Fish thinks a beat.

FISH
Damn. Wait up, G.

Fish follows Greg.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. A WAREHOUSE - LATER.

A warehouse in the city. Fish and Greg walk up to the place.
A BIG GUARD stands outside.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. BACK OF CLUB - SAME TIME.

An alley filled with dumpsters and debris.

FISH
We can get in here. You go first.

GREG
Oh yeah, I go in and get shot.

FISH
Well, somebody gotta go in first.

Greg starts to climb the dumpster. The sound of A GUN BEING
COCKED.

LADENNIS (o.s.)
Ain't nobody goin' nowhere.

Greg and Fish turn to see LaDennis holding a gun.

CUT TO:

57 INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER.

It's a seedy-looking place. June sits, looking angry and scared. Z-Boy stands behind him with a gun. Kenyatta talks on a phone. He has a BIG KNIFE in his waistband. He sees LaDennis bring in Greg and Fish and hangs up.

KENYATTA

What are these two doing here?

GREG

June, you alright, man?

LADENNIS

Shut the fuck up.

Greg and Fish shut up.

LADENNIS (cont'd)

They just punk asses. Everybody chill out. I'll take care of this.

Kenyatta's expression changes to menace.

KENYATTA

You making decisions now, LaDennis?

LADENNIS

(scared)

Naw, I was just...

Kenyatta walks toward LaDennis. All the men become tense.

KENYATTA

How many times I gotta tell your supremely ignorant ass not to think?

Kenyatta gets in LaDennis's face.

FISH

If I was you, I'd whip his ass.

LADENNIS

Shut the--

(to Kenyatta, terrified)

I'm sorry. You right.

Kenyatta backs away and turns to June, smiling.

KENYATTA

See why I need you, June? These two ain't got a brain cell between `em.

JUNE

Kenyatta, man, I don't wanna work for you.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

KENYATTA

Then why did you take my money? Why did you waste my time?

JUNE

I don't know. I was wrong.

KENYATTA

I'm thinkin' I got me a new man then, bam. You quit on me. You obviously don't have a lot of business "accaman."

FISH

(sotto, to Greg)

Yo, that ain't right, is it?

Kenyatta hears this, and walks over to Fish, stepping on his foot. Fish yells in pain.

KENYATTA

What did you say, nigga?

FISH

(in pain)

Nothing, nothing!

Kenyatta steps off Fish's foot. Greg stares at Kenyatta with hatred.

KENYATTA

(to Greg)

You look like you got something to say.

Greg just glares at him, afraid to speak.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

Go on, you got my permission. Express yourself.

GREG

June ain't no crack dealer, like you.

JUNE

G, be quiet, man...

GREG

You already fucked up your life. Let him have his.

Kenyatta walks over to Greg.

KENYATTA

(laughs)

See, I like him.

Kenyatta puts his arm with around Greg's neck.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

KENYATTA (cont'd)

Man just don't care. I mean, he just said what he had to say to me...

Kenyatta pulls the knife, and puts it to Greg's throat.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

...even thought he know I gotta kill his ass up for saying it.

Everyone tenses. June and fish shout protests. Z-Boy and LaDennis urge Kenyatta on. Greg struggles.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

Hold still, fool. You gonna make me cut you crooked.

June walks over to them.

JUNE

Okay! I'll do it. Just let them go.

Kenyatta waits a tense moment, then releases Greg. Greg walks back to Fish. June goes to them. They embrace.

Z-BOY

Look at them, hugging like punks.

LaDennis and Z-boy laugh. Kenyatta cuts it off with a nasty look. He admires their friendship in his own way.

KENYATTA

(to the fellas)

Look at you. Young, black, and poor. Don't you know that nobody wants you?

Kenyatta puts the big knife away. He reaches behind his back and pulls out a .9 mm Glock.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

I bet you spend your whole life dreamin' about what you ain't never gonna have. And you'll never do nothin' about it, because you know. You know life is against you. You know if the world took a shit right now, all of your dumb asses would come squishin' out.

Kenyatta looks right at the fellas. Greg is particularly troubled by Kenyatta's words.

KENYATTA (cont'd)

So if you don't want to work for me, it don't matter. Sooner or later, I got you anyway.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (3)

KENYATTA (cont'd)
 You'll be buyin' my shit to get high, and
 forget about your sorry life, or your
 black asses will be right back here,
 begging to work for me.

Kenyatta walks to his desk and sits on the edge.

KENYATTA (cont'd)
 Now, get outta my face.

GREG
 We can just go?

FISH
 How we know you won't shoot us when we--

Kenyatta cocks the gun.

KENYATTA
 GET THE FUCK OUT!

Fish literally disappears running. Z-Boy and LaDennis laugh.
 June walks out. Greg lingers, looking at Kenyatta, thinking
 about his bitter words. Then Greg leaves.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. WAREHOUSE - SECONDS LATER.

The fellas walk out. They are still scared by the event.
 They look unsettled and a little despondent. Fish is about
 to say something, then thinks better of it. They walk down
 the dark street in silence.

DISSOLVE TO:

59 INT. GREG'S ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON.

Greg is putting on his tux. He has a determined expression
 on his face.

CUT TO:

60 INT. REED LIVING ROOM - LATER.

Greg comes down to greet his family. They clap. Louise
 takes a picture.

LOUISE
 Son, you look handsome.

GREG
 Thanks ma.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

WILLIE

I thought you were gonna get the tuxedo with the tails.

GREG

Nope, that was the old me, trippin', trying to be something I'm not. From now on, I'm keeping everything real. I'll see you all later. Don't wait up.

Greg walks out the door. The family ad libs cheerful good-byes, "Have Fun", "We love you" and the like, then:

WILLIE

I can't believe he's going without a date.

LOUISE

My poor baby.

GRAMPS

This is some embarrassing shit.

CUT TO:

61

62 INT. THE IRON PIMP.

Greg gets on the bus, pays his fare, and walks to the back. People stare.

GREG

Hey, how's everybody doin'? Yeah, I'm going to my senior prom on the bus, and you know what? I'm cool with it, because it's real, and I'm real. Thank you, thank you.

Greg sits down. The same Bum we saw on the bus before gives him the thumbs up. They slap five.

CUT TO:

63 INT. BALLROOM.

PAN UP TO show that the house is LIVE! SLAMMING MUSIC! It's more like a house party than a formal dance. June, Dennia, Vanessa and Fish are at the door. Greg walks up.

Greg walks into the lobby of a big hotel. Prom types mill about. A banner reads: "DU BOIS CLASS OF 1998!" June, Fish, Dennia and Vanessa walk in. Greg walks up.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

JUNE

Damn, you really did it. You came by yourself.

GREG

Don't need no date to validate me. I'm just keepin' it real.

Greg ad libs hello to the women. They all move inside.

FISH

Get ready for the time of your life, baby.

He hugs Vanessa, trying to feel her up.

VANESSA

Watch the makeup, boy!

FISH

Don't worry 'bout that. I'm gone sweat that off you.

VANESSA

Uh huh. Could you get me some punch?

FISH

Sure thing. It should be spiked by now. And if it ain't--

Fish pulls out a little flask.

FISH (cont'd)

I got the hook up.

Fish goes off. Vanessa smiles at a guy, then goes off with him. ANGLE ON: June, Dennia, and Greg.

JUNE

G, I'm gonna grab us a table.

GREG

That's cool.

June and Dennia move by Snap, who is with a group of people. Snap watches them with anger.

LaRonda, Shaheedah, the Tall Woman, and some other girls look angrily at June. They talk in whispers.

Anetta stands to the side with a pack of unattractive girls who are alone. She looks sad.

ANGLE ON: Cinny and Phillip at a table. Cinny looks sad, as well. Phillip tries to kiss her. He turns her head.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2)

PHILLIP

What's wrong with you?

CINNY

I said I'd come here with you, but don't act like we're together again.

PHILLIP

See, you just need to loosen up.

Phillip pulls Cinny on the dance floor. They start to dance. Phillip notices Greg. He smiles devilishly at him, pulling Cinny closer. Greg takes a step toward them.

JUNE

Don't do it, G. I told you not to come by yourself, man. Look at you.

Greg walks out a door into an outside area.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. GARDEN AREA.

Greg walks out. June and Dennia are on his heels.

JUNE

Okay G, so you blew it with Cinny. Let it go, man. This is your prom.

GREG

Just go on back and have fun. Don't worry about me.

A BIG HAND lands on June's shoulder. It's Snap's hand. June turns around and sees the big man.

JUNE

(scared)

Yo, Snap, whassup, my brotha?

SNAP

You with my woman.

DENNIA

Eugene, what are you doin'?

GREG

Eugene?

JUNE

Eugene?

DENNIA

I'm with him tonight, and that's it.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

Snap's hand moves to June's collar.

JUNE
(choking)
I'm gonna have to mess you up.

JUNE'S FEET rise off the floor. Dennia beats on Snap's big arms to no avail.

DENNIA
Eugene, you're killing him!

Suddenly, we hear a loud THUMP. Snap utters a LOUD GRUNT. His EYES BULGE. Snap drops June, who lands on his feet.

SNAP'S LEGS. We see Greg's foot between them. Greg removes his foot. Snap drops to his knees.

GREG
(to Snap)
Listen carefully: She don't want your ass! She only hung with you for popularity. But when you get an NFL contract, they'll be a hundred goldiggers just like her on your jock, so get the fuck over it!

SNAP
(realizing)
Yeah, you right.
(smiling to Dennia)
You blew it, woman.

Greg helps Snap to his feet. They walk back in. June looks at Greg as if seeing him for the first time.

DENNIA
(wondering aloud)
NFL contract?

JUNE
Don't you even think about it.

June takes Dennia back inside.

CUT TO:

65 INT. THE PARTY - LATER.

The place is still rocking. Snap sits with an ice pack on his nuts. June, Dennia and Greg sit at a table. June's jacket is on the back of a chair. Fish runs up.

FISH
Yo, anybody seen my date, Vanessa?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

JUNE

Fish, she dumped you.

FISH

Man, she just in the bathroom. She probably got one of them over active colons or something.

GREG

Fish, the woman jettied on you. She was drunk when you met her, and she probably only got a good look at you tonight. Deal with the shit.

FISH

You right. Okay, I'm gone get me a woman. And I don't care where I get her.
 (notices a girl)
 Yo, baby...

Fish walks off. LaRonda walks up. She grabs June's jacket and runs.

JUNE

What the-- Come back here!

June takes off after her. She runs out of the ballroom. June follows.

CUT TO:

66 INT. HALLWAY HOTEL.

LaRonda runs down a hallway into a room. June follows her inside.

CUT TO:

67 INT. ROOM.

June runs in. The door closes. The room is dark. Suddenly, the lights come on. June is inside, surrounded by a roomful of angry women, including Shaheedah, LaRonda and the Tall Woman. June knows he's in deep shit.

JUNE

You ladies look beautiful tonight.

June tries to run, but they grab him.

CUT TO:

68 INT. HALLWAY.

We hear June getting his ass kicked.

CUT TO:

69 INT. BALLROOM.

Greg goes over to a refreshment area. Cinny is there with Anetta, trying to clean off a stain on Anetta's dress.

CINNY

Anetta, come on girl, stop crying. You smudging your makeup.

ANETTA

(teary)
Okay, any second now.

GREG

Can I help?

Cinny turns and sees Greg. She reacts with mixed emotion.

CINNY

Greg, go away.

GREG

Cinny, I really need to talk to you.

CINNY

No. Some boys thought dumping punch on my friend was funny.

ANETTA

(still teary)
I should have just stayed home.

CINNY

No Anetta, you have a right to be here.

GREG

Cinny...

CINNY

Greg, could you please go away?

Greg walks off. He passes Fish, who's begging a woman, who keeps shaking her head "no". Greg bumps into Mr. Shapic.

MR. SHAPIC

Greg, what's up?

GREG

Hi, Mr. Shapic.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

MR. SHAPIC

(beat)

So, I noticed that Ms. Hawkins is with another man.

GREG

Go on, gloat about it.

MR. SHAPIC

I'm not happy about that. Love is hard on a brother.

GREG

I blew it, Mr. Shapic. I lied to her.

MR. SHAPIC

Yeah, that's bad. You know, I've seen a change in you lately, like you've taken ownership of your life. If that's true, then you'll do what it takes to get her back.

GREG

But how do I--

ERIKA BADU walks up, looking like a million dollars. She takes Shapic's arm and kisses him. Greg is speechless.

ERIKA

Stan, I must dance right now.

MR. SHAPIC

Okay, baby. This is a student of mine, Greg Reed.

ERIKA

(to Greg)

Hello, young brother.

GREG

(shocked)

Do you know who you are?

ERIKA

(laughs)

Most of the time.

(touches Greg)

I sense you've done a woman wrong.

GREG

How did you know--

ERIKA

Ms. Badu knows all. Here, burn these. They help cleanse the heart.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (2)

She hands Greg some incense.

GREG
Incense? Does that help?

MR. SHAPIC
You see I'm with her, don't you?

Mr. Shapic and Erika go on the dance floor. A SLOW JAM kicks in. People start to dance. June walks up. His tux is all fucked up.

GREG
What happened to you?

JUNE
Nothing. Can't no females keep June Nelson from getting his prom on.

June takes a shocked Dennia and dances with her. Cinny dances with Phillip. Anetta is off to the side, watching people dance, trying to cover the stain on her dress. She looks heart-broken. Greg walks over to her.

GREG
You want to dance?

ANETTA
No. I don't need charity.

GREG
Look, Anetta, you fat, not very cute, and you always doggin' out brothers. That's why you ain't got no date. I don't have one either and you why. If anybody ever needed some charity, it's you-- and maybe me, too.

Anetta is effected by Greg's truth. He takes her hands and they start to dance. Cinny is surprised by Greg's gesture. She smiles at Anetta. Anetta leans her head on Greg's shoulder as they move across the floor. The song ends. Greg and Anetta separate.

ANETTA
Thank you, Greg.

GREG
You're welcome.

ANGLE ON: The stage. Chambers, the nerdy-looking kid, ascends the stage and grabs the mike.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (3)

CHAMBERS

Alright, seniors. I'm Thomas Chambers,
class President. I'm pleased to announce
that DuBois high school's Prom Queen for
1998 is Cinny Hawkins.

Applause as she comes to the stage and gets a crown.

CHAMBERS (cont'd)

And the prom king is-- Hey, me!

The class boos loudly.

CHAMBERS (cont'd)

No, really I won. I counted the votes
myself.

The booing continues. Greg goes to the stage and takes the
mic from Chambers.

GREG

Go on Chambers, you know you lyin'. Yo
everybody, I just wanted to say everybody
have a good time!

The crowd cheers.

GREG (cont'd)

If I owned a liquor store, and a motel, I
could probably retire tonight.

Laughter from the crowd.

GREG (cont'd)

I've seen some of y'all pointing and
laughing at me because I came here by
myself. Well, I wanted to tell you why.

PHILLIP

Get your sorry ass off the stage!

The crowd agrees.

GREG

Not 'til I say what I got to say. See,
ladies, men are stupid.

The women agree with this.

GREG (cont'd)

We act like fools when all a woman wants
you to do is be real with her.

MALE STUDENT

Shut the fuck up.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (4)

MALE STUDENT'S DATE

You'd better shut up, if you wanna be with me tonight. Go on, Greg. Preach it.

The women egg him on. The men become afraid to protest.

GREG

Thank you.

GREG (cont'd)

I lost my woman because I acted like a typical man. That's why I came here without a date. Didn't want to be with anybody but her. It's okay, because it's how I felt. It's real, and reality is a good thing. It makes you grow up, and do what's right. It forces you to stop trippin' and put your dreams in their place. The woman I lost was real, but I treated her like a dream, like she didn't deserve honesty and the truth. But now I know better. I'm better, and I hope she can see that in me.

Greg looks right at Cinny.

FEMALE STUDENT

Tell her you love her!

The crowd urges him on. Greg moves closer to Cinny.

GREG

Sorry, but I'm too scared to say I love her-- even though I do.

The crowd starts to clap. Cinny moves toward Greg. Greg descends the stage, and goes to her. Phillip jumps between them.

PHILLIP

Wait a damned minute! She's with me--

Snap pulls Phillip back. Snap has been crying.

SNAP

(teary)

Can't you see the girl's in love, man?

Snap tosses Phillip aside. Cinny goes to Greg. They embrace. The crowd applauds.

GREG

Am I back to being your Could-Be Man?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (5)

CINNY
 Actually, I think it's time for a
 promotion.

Greg and Cinny kiss. A SONG STARTS. Greg and Cinny slow
 dance. They move past June and Dennia, then Fish and Anetta
 who have found each other.

PULL UP AND AWAY to see Greg and Cinny dancing in the middle
 of the prom crowd.

CUT TO:

70 INT. REED KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY.

Greg bounds happily down the stairs. He walks into the room
 to find everyone except Gramps at the table, looking sad. In
 the middle of the table is A WHITE ENVELOPE.

LOUISE
 It's from Morehouse.

Greg takes the envelope, opens it.

GREG
 (reading)
 Dear applicant, we regret...

The family reacts with grief. Greg puts the letter down.

GREG (cont'd)
 Hey, I can try again next year.

Gramps enters with a letter and a yellow envelope.

GRAMPS
 I took this outta the mail. I thought it
 was my social security check.

WILLIE
 Your check goes straight to the bank.

GRAMPS
 But you never know when they gonna fuck
 up and send you another one. Anyway,
 it's another college letter.

GREG
 But I only applied to five...

Greg takes the letter from Gramps, reads it. Surprise washes
 over his face.

CUT TO:

71 EXT. A PARK - LATER.

Greg and Cinny sit on a bench. Cinny reads the letter.

CINNY

We're pleased to inform you that Harris Trade College has accepted you for the fall semester.

GREG

Mr. Shapic submitted me. I went to his house and thanked him. You know, I had no idea how much a plumber makes. They get paid!

They get up and walk.

CINNY

You know, the college I'm attending is only five miles from Harris Trade School.

GREG

Cool. Maybe we can get a place together.

CINNY

Greg...

GREG

Just a suggestion.

Greg and Cinny lock gazes. Greg moves in for a kiss, then pulls up.

GREG (cont'd)

Wait. I want this to be perfect.

Greg closes his eyes, concentrates, and: The park TURNS INTO AN OCEANFRONT VIEW around them. They are on a cliff overlooking the ocean. A bright SUN is behind thick clouds. Cinny sees it, too. She's shocked.

CINNY

Greg, how did you---

GREG

I'll teach you one day.

They kiss as the SUN comes from behind a cloud in BRILLIANT LIGHT. A FLOCK OF SEAGULLS LIFTS INTO FLIGHT AROUND THEM.

FADE OUT.

OVER CREDITS

Still photos of:

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

DENNIA. Caption: Gained forty pounds and became an irritating ass housewife.

ANETTA. Caption: Lost forty pounds and became a Congresswoman.

LADENNIS and Z-BOY. Caption: Arrested in drug bust on "COPS".

SNAP. Caption: Played in the NFL and married a golddigger who took half his shit.

PHILLIP. Caption: Worked as a janitor at city college, watching everybody become better than his ass in life.

KENYATTA. Caption: Went to prison. Took acting lessons in the joint. Released, and got his own sitcom on TV.

MR. SHAPIC. Became successful motivational speaker. Wrote the bestselling book: "Awaken The Badass Within."

FISH. Caption: Became an assistant at a radio station. talked so much shit, they made him a successful hip-hop D.J.

JUNE. Caption: Moved to Sweden where drugs are legal. Opened up a weed store. Fathered twelve children-- with four different wives.

CINNY. Caption: Graduated with honors from medical school. Opened a successful medical practice.

GREG. Caption: Graduated from trade school without honors. Became a carpenter. One day, while trippin', Greg envisions a machine that lays carpet. He marries Cinny, sells the machine, and becomes a millionaire. Now, trip on that!

FADE OUT.

THE END