

UNBREAKABLE BOND

By

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"Everyone wants undying love, but go about obtaining it the wrong way."

Bernard Mersier

FADE IN:

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

It's a clear black sky. The summer breeze is blowing through the area. We can hear people talking, and car doors being opened and closed.

SUPERIMPOSE: DETROIT, MICHIGAN 1990

EXT. THE ALLEY - AN HOUR LATER

The lights on the top of police cars and ambulances reveal the graffiti on the walls in the filthy alley covered with trash.

The people from the neighborhood are standing around gossiping and pointing, watching the police yellow tape off the scene.

CLOSE UP REGINA'S BODY

She's beside a dumpster like a piece of trash, naked, beating and cut up. Blood spills from her light brown skin, staining the trash underneath her, lying cold as December weather.

C.S.I is examining her and the scene for clues.

Focusing on the people in the neighborhood, judging from the conversations, and expressions of disgust, you can tell they're not surprised she's dead, and possibly happy she's gone.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

The people you allow in your life are lessons distributing love and pain, gaining knowledge from this soul bestowed upon you. They say love is compared to heaven, but the pain is like feeling your flesh scorched by the flames of hell. So, I ask...why would a person go through this much pain? Let me start from the beginning.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. THE PARK - AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: DETROIT, MICHIGAN 1985

It's a warm sunny day. The children are enjoying themselves on the playground laughing, running around, swinging and going up and down the slides.

ANGLE ON--

YOUNG LATRICE, brown skin five-years-old. She's playing in the sandbox wearing a cute little T-Shirt and shorts with her hair in two ponytails. Although she's playing alone not wanting to be bothered with the other children, it seems she's having fun making sand castles with her bucket and shovel.

Sitting off to the side on a bench watching is her parents THOMAS and REGINA. They're a happy married couple wearing warm attire.

Thomas is on the dark side, short and chubby, but he looks adorable.

The two keep their eyes on Young Latrice, while giving each other kisses, laughing every few seconds.

Coming across the field is YOUNG ANTOINE, also five-years-old. He's brown skin with a small strawberry blonde Afro, wearing a T-Shirt and shorts.

Accompanying him are his parents TIONNA and JUSTIN, wearing matching white outfits.

Tionna is a beautiful light skin woman with flowing long hair and a well-sculptured body.

Justin is a flashy pretty boy, light skin with hazel eyes.

Young Antoine runs to the playground area passing Young Latrice playing in the sandbox.

Pausing from running, he turns looking at her smiling, slowly walking back towards her.

Stepping into the sandbox, he continues smiling, instantly gaining a crush on her.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Hi.

Young Latrice continues playing in the sand, not paying him attention.

YOUNG ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Can I play with you? My name is Antoine.

She stops putting sand in her bucket looking up at him, and she catches the same feelings he has, staring at him smiling.

YOUNG LATRICE

I'm Latrice. You have a funny color hair.

Young Antoine laughs, rubbing his hand across his Afro.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I think so, too.

The two laugh.

Young Antoine takes a seat close to her, and they both start filling the bucket with sand.

Regina and Thomas look at the two amazed they're playing with each other, because Young Latrice usually likes playing alone.

Tionna and Justin make it down to the sandbox standing to the side looking just as amazed as Regina and Thomas, seeing their son having fun with another child.

Regina and Thomas walk over to Tionna and Justin.

REGINA

Hello, my name is Regina.

THOMAS

And I'm Thomas.

TIONNA

It's a pleasure to meet you. My name is Tionna and this is my husband Justin.

They all shake hands.

REGINA

So, what's your son name?

TIONNA

Antoine.

REGINA

I'm amazed our daughter Latrice is having fun playing with him. She usually likes being alone.

TIONNA

I was telling Justin I'm shocked he singled your daughter out to play with. He's a loner as well.

REGINA

Well, hopefully they'll continue playing with each other after today. It feels good seeing her interact with someone.

TIONNA

I don't see why not. We can exchange numbers and talk about it.

REGINA

I'm glad to hear that.

While the women are talking getting to know each other better, Justin and Thomas slide off to the side so they can talk.

THOMAS

What's going on with you?

JUSTIN

Nothing much, man. It's a nice day, so I decided to bring the family out and enjoy the sun. I'm happy my lil man is actually playing with someone.

THOMAS

That's how I feel about my daughter. She needed this encounter.

JUSTIN

Same thing I was saying about my lil man.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

And that's how we met. When you're a child, you have no idea why energy draws you to a person, because all you know is you wanna play. People say it's hard seeing the things you have in common with someone, and that's only because they don't see it goes deeper than just you. Sometimes...your parents have a part in what you attract, because the person you're dealing with is going through something similar.

INT. JUSTIN'S TRUCK - AFTERNOON

Young Antoine is sitting in the passenger seat of Justin's fully loaded Expedition playing his game gear, waiting for Justin to come out the store.

Taking a break from playing the game, he looks around the slum area they're in watching the homeless drunks harass people coming out of the store, and the female prostitutes walking their stroll searching for clients.

Justin comes out of the store wearing a wife beater and shorts, adjusting his jewelry.

Coming out behind him is an attractive brown skin woman wearing some skimpy shorts and a halter top, looking like she's no older than twenty-one.

The woman hands Justin some folded up money.

Justin gives her a kiss on the cheek, followed by slapping her ass, before making his way to the truck.

Justin gets in getting comfortable placing the money in his pocket, turning his attention to Young Antoine.

JUSTIN

You see your daddy working out there?

Young Antoine turns looking at him confused.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Working?

JUSTIN

Yeah. Aside from what I sell to these fiends, I pimp these hoes. You can't talk to bitches without them giving you something other than pussy for wasting a few minutes of your time. Understand what I'm saying?

YOUNG ANTOINE

I guess so.

Justin laughs pulling a cigarette out placing it in his mouth lighting it.

JUSTIN

Wait till you get older.

Justin takes a pull from his cigarette starting the truck up.

Young Antoine stares at him confused for a few more seconds, before going back to playing his game.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

My pops had no respect for women. Even with my moms, the love he showed her if any was mediocre at best. Trice dad on the other hand...it really puzzled me why her mom stayed with him.

CUT TO:

INT. REGINA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Regina is sitting in the driver seat of her white Neon.

Young Latrice is sitting in the back.

They're waiting for Thomas to finish loading the groceries in the trunk.

The trunk is heard slammed shut, and then Thomas makes his way to the passenger seat getting in.

Sweat is glistening from his forehead, pulling out a flask taking a sip.

Regina turns looking at him disgusted, and then turns her attention to Young Latrice.

REGINA

You ready to go home so you can help me make dinner?

Young Latrice looks at her mother smiling.

YOUNG LATRICE

Yes.

Thomas wipes the residue from his mouth, placing the flask away.

THOMAS

Let me ask you something.

Regina looks at him batting her eyes with an attitude.

REGINA

What?

THOMAS

You not out here cheating on me, are you?

She rolls her eyes, sighing deep.

REGINA

You need to leave that drink alone.

He laughs rubbing his chin.

THOMAS

I need to leave the drink alone? Can you explain the condoms I found in the drawer?

Regina turns looking at him confused.

REGINA

Why would there be condoms in the house,
and we never in life used them? Maybe you
had 'em and didn't get a chance to use 'em
with your other bitch.

Thomas laughs.

Young Latrice looks on confused.

THOMAS

That's funny. You wanna tell me who you
fucking?

Regina rolls her eyes starting the car.

REGINA

I don't have time for yo shit. You know
what you do, so...

Thomas grabs her tight around the throat making her gasp
hard, grabbing at his hand.

THOMAS

You're fucking accusing me of cheating,
and you selling pussy? Did you really
think I didn't know?

He squeezes tighter making it harder for her to breathe.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

The next time I ask you a question like
this just admit you're a whore, and I
won't have to beat yo ass. You understand?

Keeping his grip on her throat, he taps her hard on the
side of the face three times before releasing her.

Young Latrice watches in fear as Thomas leans back in his
seat pulling his flask out taking a sip.

Regina sits crying holding her throat.

Finishing with his nice sip, he turns looking at Young
Latrice.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

The same thing will happen to you if you
end up whoring like your mother.

Focusing back on Regina, he shoves her head.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Get us home. I'm hungry.

With no further words, Regina pulls out of the parking lot.

Young Latrice is silent with tears in her eyes, tired of
seeing her father abusing and degrading Regina.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

As you can see, our lives are somewhat
similar. The only difference is my mother
has no idea about what my father really
does aside from his hustle. And Latrice
mother refuses to leave, all because
Thomas is her first real love. Funny how
life guides you unexpectedly to the one
who needs you, and you need them. This
violence and disrespect was never shown
when we were all together, but me and
Trice knew the truth. Five years
later...we're still good friends.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The common neighborhood is silent as the night breeze blows
and the streetlights brighten the area.

Regina's two-level family flat is the third house from the
corner. Regina's white Neon is parked in the driveway. Two
white plastic chairs are on the porch, and in the patch of
grass surrounded by dirt in front of the house is an old
rusty chair.

Young Antoine's ten-speed rests on the kickstand beside the
house.

Young Antoine and Young Latrice, now ten-years-old are both
wearing shorts and T-Shirts are sitting on the wooden steps
of the porch laughing and talking.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

By this time our parents were cool enough to let us chill till a certain time, since we didn't live far from each other. So every other weekend, I'd go hang with Trice to keep her mind off her abusive father and the tricking her mother was doing.

YOUNG ANTOINE

It's about time I head home.

YOUNG LATRICE

You scared of what daddy might say?

He laughs.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Why would I be scared of him, and I know what my daddy would do to him?

Young Latrice blushes.

YOUNG LATRICE

Yeah, your daddy is tough.

YOUNG ANTOINE

He's something. Are you going to be okay?

Young Latrice looks back at the house door, and then looks at him sighing.

YOUNG LATRICE

I should be okay. Mama should be sleep, and by the time dad gets home, I should be sleep.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Well, you know if you need me, all you have to do is call.

YOUNG LATRICE

I know. I'm glad you're my friend.

He looks at her with a statement in his smile, just in case the words he's about to say doesn't reassure her, the smile will.

YOUNG ANTOINE

As long as I'm alive, I'll always be here
for you.

His words make her blush. Moisture fills her eyes ready to cry, leaning towards him for a kiss.

This is something he yearns for inside, but his mind won't allow the desires to follow through, quickly turning his head before her lips connect with his.

Baffled by his actions, she gently grabs his chin making him turn his head looking into her eyes filled with love.

YOUNG LATRICE

What's wrong?

He bites down on his lip shaking his head. Not disappointed, but more so sadden he can't follow through with the love she has for him.

YOUNG ANTOINE

...You're my friend.

YOUNG LATRICE

Friends can kiss, right?

YOUNG ANTOINE

No.

YOUNG LATRICE

Why?

YOUNG ANTOINE

The type of kiss you want could ruin our
friendship.

YOUNG LATRICE

I don't think so.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Latrice...

The conversation is cut short from the loud music blasting from the beige Cherokee pulling up in front of the house.

Young Antoine stares at the Jeep confused, but Young Latrice already knows what's about to go down, sighing shaking her head.

YOUNG ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Who is this?

She lowers her head ashamed.

YOUNG LATRICE

He's one of my mother's friends.

Stepping from the Cherokee dressed like a thug wearing sagging jeans and a wife beater smoking a blunt is DONALD, early-twenties. His dark brown muscular skin is tatted up.

Taking a pull from the blunt arrogantly, he makes his way to the porch.

He stops in front of Young Latrice taking another pull smiling at her.

DONALD

I can't wait till you get older. You might be better than yo mama.

Shame spreads across Young Latrice face lowering her head.

Young Antoine is instantly offended seeing his best friend disrespected, looking at her with his eyes filled with rage, before standing up balling his fist.

Donald laughs taking a pull from the blunt, flicking the ashes to the side.

DONALD (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you standing up for?

YOUNG ANTOINE

You disrespected my friend.

Young Latrice looks over at Young Antoine grabbing his wrist trying to calm him down.

YOUNG LATRICE

It's okay. It doesn't bother me.

Young Antoine snatches his arm away keeping his fist balled staring at Donald.

YOUNG ANTOINE

It's not okay! If you let people disrespect you now, it'll never stop.

(To Donald)

I need you to apologize.

Taking one last pull, Donald puts the blunt out placing it in his pocket looking at Young Antoine laughing.

DONALD

Calm down lil nigga, before you get that ass beat.

YOUNG ANTOINE

That could be true. If you don't apologize, I'll find out.

Donald cracks his neck laughing.

DONALD

You'll find out? Boy...

Young Antoine swings his right with all his might connecting with Donald's jaw, immediately following it up with a left trying to drop him, but Donald eats the punches, hitting Young Antoine in the stomach folding him over, damn near ready to throw up.

While Young Antoine is folded over trying to catch his breath, Donald hits him with a hard right knocking him to the ground.

Young Latrice stands up ready to help, and Donald turns looking at her cocking his fist back, but it doesn't scare her, still taking a swing on Donald.

Instead of punching her, he shoves her hard to the ground, and then focuses back on Young Antoine still on the ground trying to catch a breath, sounding as if he's dying.

Donald begins stomping Young Antoine like he's trying to put out a fire, enjoying his moans of pain.

Young Latrice gets up trying to help, and again, Donald looks back at her, shoving her back to the ground.

Tired of stomping Young Antoine, Donald walks over grabbing the rusty chair.

Walking back over to Young Antoine, he raises the chair ready to smash his head in.

Regina comes running out the house in her nightgown.

She rushes over to Donald grabbing his arm, and he looks back at her ready to attack, but then he lowers the chair.

REGINA

What the fuck are you doing?!

DONALD

The lil motherfucker hit me like a grown ass man, so I beat his ass like a grown ass man.

Young Latrice sits up on the ground.

YOUNG LATRICE

Mama, Antoine was only trying to---

Regina turns around furious staring at Young Latrice.

REGINA

You shut up! I keep telling you to leave his ass alone, because he's nothing but trouble!

YOUNG LATRICE

But, mama---

REGINA

But mama my ass! Get yo ass up and get in

the house! I'll deal with you after my company leaves.

(To Donald)

You ready, baby?

Donald looks at her smiling, giving her a kiss on the cheek, grabbing her ass.

DONALD

You know it, baby.

Regina gives him another kiss, and then focuses on Young Latrice still sitting on the ground crying looking over at Young Antoine moaning in pain.

REGINA

Get this boy away from my house, and bring yo ass in.

Regina walks back in the house.

Donald looks at Young Antoine, and then Young Latrice laughing, making his way to the steps.

DONALD

You better get you a real man, girl. Stop fucking with these soft niggas.

Donald laughs going in the house.

Young Latrice rushes over to Young Antoine kneeling down trying to comfort him, caressing his face looking at the blood coming from his mouth and nose.

YOUNG LATRICE

Are you okay?

Despite being in pain, Young Antoine licks the blood from his mouth, looking at her smiling.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I'll be okay.

He stands to his feet dusting off, and she stands holding his hand.

YOUNG LATRICE

Are you sure, you're okay?

YOUNG ANTOINE

Nothing a hot bath and ice won't fix. Are you going to be okay for the night?

Young Latrice takes a deep breath looking at the house, and then back at Young Antoine trying not to cry.

YOUNG LATRICE

Yeah. I'll just listen to some music as always. It doesn't bother me as it did when it first started.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Well, don't end up being like her.

YOUNG LATRICE

I won't.

He clinches her hand tighter, making her look him in the face seeing the seriousness in his eyes.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I'm serious. I gotta go. I love you.

He gives her a kiss on the cheek, and then slowly walks over to his bike holding his ribs, getting on the bike riding off.

Young Latrice stands with tears coming down her face watching him pedal off down the street.

For once in her life, she can actually say there's someone who truly loves her.

She smiles taking a deep breath heading towards the house, no longer caring her mother is sleeping with another man.

CUT TO:

INT. TIONNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Young Antoine comes into the house holding his side, closing the door behind him.

Walking through the nicely furnished living room with pictures of him on the glass tables, he pauses staring at one picture.

YOUNG ANTOINE'S POV

It's a picture of him and Young Latrice at the park eating ice cream enjoying the day and each others company.

The bruise on his face makes it hard for him to smile, but he manages to crack one, making his way into the kitchen.

Inside the kitchen, the dishes are put away in the rack.

A cordless phone is resting on the charger on the black counter matching the black stove, microwave and refrigerator.

Someone left their plate on the table with the silverware to the side and an empty glass.

Young Antoine walks over to the refrigerator opening the door grabbing a cold bottle of water.

Closing the door, he places the bottle to his cheek wincing, embracing the coolness soothing the pain.

TIONNA (O.S.)

Antoine, is that you?

YOUNG ANTOINE

Yeah.

TIONNA (O.S.)

Your dinner is in the microwave.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Okay.

Keeping the bottle to his cheek, he goes over to the microwave opening it and inside lies his dinner, which is macaroni, green beans, mashed potatoes and a fried pork chop.

Not feeling up to eating, he closes the microwave and then takes a seat at the table lowering his head.

Tionna comes to the doorway wearing her black silk robe,

staring at Young Antoine with his head down.

TIONNA

What's wrong?

Young Antoine keeps his head down with the bottle still pressed against his face.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Nothing.

TIONNA

Nothing? What's with the bottle?

Walking over to the table, she grabs a chair moving it closer to him taking a seat.

Looking at him concerned as any mother should and would be. She gently places her hand on the back of his head.

He cringes from the pain.

Tionna knows someone hurt her son, but she also knows she can't outright ask him who did it, because it would make him shut down.

TIONNA

You wanna tell me what happened?

YOUNG ANTOINE

No.

TIONNA

Look at me.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I don't want you to see my face like this.

TIONNA

My son is handsome, no matter what's wrong with his face. Look at me.

Placing the bottle down, Young Antoine slowly lifts his head.

Seeing the bruise on his face, busted lip and swollen eye, she goes to reach for his face, and he turns his head.

TIONNA (CONT'D)

Who did this to you?

YOUNG ANTOINE

...I was protecting Trice.

TIONNA

Did some other kid do this?

YOUNG ANTOINE

No. Some guy her mother messing around with.

TIONNA

Okay? And he put his hands on you because?

YOUNG ANTOINE

You told me don't anyone disrespect her. He said something wrong, so we got into it.

Instantly upset, she slams her fist on the table.

TIONNA

Goddamn it.

Getting up from the table, she makes her way over to the phone picking it up prepared to dial.

Young Antoine rushes over to her.

YOUNG ANTOINE

What are you doing?

TIONNA

I'm about to give that bitch a piece of my mind. You don't let your random fuck buddies put hands on my child, and he was protecting your child. Fuck that.

YOUNG ANTOINE

What will calling and cussing her out do?

Tionna stands silent tapping the phone on her palm, and then she looks at him with a straight face.

TIONNA

You're absolutely right. Beating the bitch ass will prove a point.

She's ready to walk out the kitchen, and Young Antoine is doing his best to try and calm her down.

The front door is hard opened and closed.

In walks Justin flashy as always with his jewelry, wearing a black wife beater with the shorts to match smoking a cigarette, holding a pint of Hennessy that's almost gone.

Tionna looks over at him, and a sly smile spreads on her face.

TIONNA (CONT'D)

Good thing you're here. Let me go change and we can roll.

Justin takes a pull from his cigarette looking at her confused.

JUSTIN

What?

TIONNA

Let me go change into my whoop ass gear, and we can roll. What part of that didn't you understand?

JUSTIN

Who ass you trying to beat?

Tionna is pissed slanting her eyebrows down, gritting her teeth, pointing at Young Antoine.

TIONNA

Are you blind? Do you not see his face?

Justin takes a sip from the bottle, followed by a pull from his cigarette looking over at Young Antoine.

JUSTIN

Somebody tore his ass up?

Tionna places her hands on her hips, seconds away from going off on Justin for not taking the situation serious.

TIONNA

Yeah, he got his ass beat by a grown ass man, defending Latrice.

JUSTIN

Latrice fuck with older dudes?

TIONNA

Don't be fucking stupid. Some random nigga her mama fucks with did this to our son. Why are we still standing here having this conversation, and not at the bitch doorstep?

Justin swallows the last bit of Hennessy, taking one last pull from his cigarette putting the butt in the bottle, placing it on the counter.

JUSTIN

Let him take the ass beating like a man and learn from it. But if it makes you feel better, when I see her tomorrow I'll speak to her.

Tionna cocks her head to the side confused, raising her eyebrow.

TIONNA

Run that by me again.

JUSTIN

When I see her tomorrow, I'll talk to her about it.

Sucking her teeth, running her tongue across her lips, she calmly makes her way over to him staring dead in his eyes.

TIONNA

Why would you be seeing her tomorrow?

Young Antoine sees the tension building.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Mama---

TIONNA

Stay out of this. Answer my question.

Justin sways his head side to side, chuckling under his breath.

JUSTIN

You need to get out my face.

TIONNA

I'm not in your face, yet. But if the next words coming from your mouth don't answer my question, I will be.

Justin's look turns serious.

JUSTIN

Get the fuck on with this tough shit.

Young Antoine stands silent on edge, not knowing how the situation will turnout.

Tionna smirks, and before Justin can blink, she grabs the empty bottle smacking him hard upside the head shattering it, following it with a strong left ready to hit him with a right, but he quickly focuses hitting her dead square in the mouth, knocking her to the floor.

Justin gets ready to stomp her, but she's right back on her feet swinging, trying her best to knock him out.

Blood is coming from the side of Justin's head and from Tionna's mouth as they brawl.

Fed up with trying to clean knock her out, Justin grabs her by the waist slamming her hard on the table, after which, he grabs her tight by the throat holding her down.

Young Antoine sees his mother struggling, gasping for air still attempting to fight.

He runs over hitting Justin in the ribs, only to get backhanded into the refrigerator hitting it hard, sliding down to the floor.

Keeping his hand around Tionna's throat, Justin looks back at Young Antoine on the floor holding his head, moaning in pain.

JUSTIN

Don't you ever run up on me, nigga! Wait till I get done with this bitch! Yo ass next!

Focusing back on Tionna, Justin squeezes her throat a little tighter causing her to turn red and veins bulge in her head, before slinging her to the floor.

Young Antoine gets up running from the kitchen, while Justin stands over Tionna watching her try to catch a breath as the blood comes from her mouth.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

I'll see the bitch tomorrow, because she owes me some pussy. Yeah, I've been fucking that loose hoe, because some of the profit she makes from hoeing comes to me. Now you know.

He laughs kicking her in the stomach.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TIONNA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is clean and elegant with black silk sheets on the king size bed. Designer clothes are seen hanging in the closet and there's a floor model television.

Young Antoine comes running in over to the nightstand opening the drawer, tossing papers out so he can obtain his mother's nine-millimeter.

Young Antoine hears his mother's screams coming from the kitchen, and he quickly rushes back to help her.

Standing in the doorway, he sees Justin down on one knee

repeatedly hitting Tionna in the face.

Looking at his mother's bloody face, eyes closed and blood spilling onto the floor, Young Antoine cocks the gun aiming at Justin.

Justin looks back at him smiling, wiping some of the blood from Tionna's face, before gently slapping her so she can open her eyes.

JUSTIN

Look at him trying to be a big man.

Young Antoine's face is red with tears flowing from his eyes gripping the gun with both of his trembling hands.

Justin laughs standing to his feet, cracking his neck and blood stained knuckles.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

Bitches shouldn't play with guns. Now if you don't...

BANG!!!

Justin looks down at his stomach where the bullet entered, and then looks at Young Antoine shocked he actually shot him.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

I don't believe...

Young Antoine shoots him six more times, and Justin hits against the counter, slowly sliding down to the floor still staring at Young Antoine.

Falling over on his side dying slow, he remains with the same shocked expression.

Tionna inches away from Justin's dead body, barely able to keep her eyes open, looking at her son still aiming at Justin's body wide-eyed, shocked he killed his father.

Tionna gets to her feet walking over to Young Antoine kneeling down looking in his eyes grabbing the gun.

TIONNA

Baby, give me the gun.

Young Antoine doesn't respond or loosen his grip.

TIONNA (CONT'D)

Baby, it's okay. Give mommy the gun.

He comes back to reality breathing hard and fast, slowly loosening up his grip, allowing Tionna to take the gun, placing it to the side on the floor.

Turning looking at his mother, he hugs her tight, letting his tears soak her robe as she holds him.

Slowly letting him go, she looks at him wiping the tears from his eyes.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I...I had too.

TIONNA

I know.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I couldn't let him beat you.

TIONNA

You did what was right. And now, I need you to do one more thing.

YOUNG ANTOINE

What?

TIONNA

I need you to leave and go to your auntie's house, but don't tell her what happened.

YOUNG ANTOINE

Huh? Why do I---

TIONNA

Just listen to me. I won't have my only child spend the rest of his life behind bars. I'll die before I let that happen.

YOUNG ANTOINE

But...I did it. You always told me accept whatever punishment is due. This is something I have to accept.

TIONNA

But, I won't let you accept it. You protected your mother, and that's all that matters. Just...just do what I told you.

They both break down crying and hugging, neither wanting to let the other go.

TIONNA (CONT'D)

Don't worry about me, I'll be fine. Mommy will always love her big man.

Knowing this could possibly be the last time he'll be able to hold his mother, he gives her a kiss on the cheek pulling away wiping the tears from her eyes, while she wipes the tears from his.

YOUNG ANTOINE

I love you.

TIONNA

I'll always love you. And remember what I'm about to tell you. Men show their emotions through actions, not tears. Shed tears for lost loved ones. Not for doing what you had to do. Now, go.

Young Antoine stands there for a few more seconds getting a good visual of his mother, giving her another kiss on the cheek, before making his way to the front door.

Tionna continues kneeling on the ground crying, picking up the gun hearing the front door open and then close.

She looks back at Justin's dead body smiling standing up to her feet.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. TIONNA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Neighbors are outside worried from hearing the gunshots.

Young Antoine comes running out the ranch style house, making his way to the side of the house getting his bike, hopping on riding off.

Just as he gets to the front of the house, he hears a gunshot.

The neighbors quickly rush over to the house banging on the door.

Wanting to stop to see what happened, but his mother's words keep replaying in his head causing him to keep pedaling forward, not looking back.

CUT TO:

INT. LATRICE BEDROOM - NIGHT

In the well-organized room with a computer desk off to the side, and an old-school television sitting on top of a wooden table, Young Latrice is laying on the bed skimming through a fashion magazine listening to her headphones.

Reaching the end of the book, she takes her headphones off sitting up, smacking her lips for taste because she's thirsty.

Standing up ready to leave the room, she pauses when she hears an argument going on outside.

Walking over to the open window, she moves the curtain looking outside.

YOUNG LATRICE POV

She sees Thomas and Regina arguing standing beside Donald's running Cherokee.

Thomas is piss drunk, barely able to stand straight.

THOMAS

You in my goddamn house fucking other niggas, and my daughter in there! I guess you'll be proud if she ends up a hoe like you!?

REGINA

First off, I ain't a motherfuckin' hoe! I'm doing whatever the fuck I wanna do

just like you, so kiss my ass!

THOMAS

Nasty ass, bitch!

REGINA

That's all you can say?! Big tough guy that beats my ass when you feel like it and fuck other bitches, but I'm a hoe, I'm a bitch?! What the fuck does that make you?!

Thomas nose flares up slanting his eyebrows down balling his fist ready to hit her, but then he looks at Donald inside the car, backing down.

Regina places her hands on her hips, daring him to hit her.

THOMAS

Get the fuck away from my house.

Regina breaks out laughing, clapping her hands.

Thomas waves his hand at her, turning his back to walk away.

REGINA

For somebody to claim he's a man, you're acting like a weak bitch right now.

He turns around eying her down with his arm cocked back ready to swing, and she doesn't blink staring directly back at him not budging.

REGINA (CONT'D)

I thought so. Let me tell you one more thing. If my daughter turns out doing exactly what we do, blame yourself. You let her see how men should treat women. Yes, she knows what I do, so I know my part in it. You on the other hand..

(Sighs deep)

Once upon a time, you were a man. Now, you're a washed up drunk and woman beater, only able to run off at the mouth and beat

women. Nice job being a role model to our daughter.

Tapping him on the shoulder, she laughs before getting in the jeep closing the door behind her.

Thomas stands silent pissed off, breathing heavy watching the jeep pull off.

Young Latrice stands with glossy eyes, ashamed these are the people she calls her parents.

Hearing the front door open and slam shut, Young Latrice quickly gets back in bed closing her eyes pretending she's sleep.

We can hear Thomas loud footsteps coming up stopping at Young Latrice bedroom.

First he knocks loud, and then he opens it with force, slamming the door against the wall.

Thomas stands in the door staring at her, appearing as if he's ready to beat her ass.

THOMAS

I know you not sleep! Did you hear that shit?! Did you hear what that bitch you call a mother said?! Of course you did. Bitches hear everything.

Walking over to the bed, he turns his head to the side spitting on the floor, staring down at Young Latrice not moving, barely able to notice she's breathing.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

You look just like her, so I know you'll be doing the same thing. And you know what?

With a sinister smile, he quickly grabs Young Latrice by the arms scaring her half to death, leaning down in her face.

Her eyes are wide with fear, and her body is shaking.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'll be right here to beat and degrade you

like the whore you are, until you realize
this isn't the road you should take.

He leans down giving her a kiss on the forehead.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Go to sleep, before I think about beating
the whore out of you now.

Slowly, he releases her arms with the same sinister smile.

Young Latrice continues staring at him in fear, watching
him make his way to the door.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I knew I should've made her get an
abortion.

He walks out slamming the door behind him.

Staring at the door shedding tears of fear and shame, Young
Latrice doesn't blink or move, listening to Thomas
footsteps walking away, praying he doesn't come back.

Turning on her side, she opens the drawer on her
nightstand, reaching in grabbing her diary and pen.

Opening the book, she begins writing the horror she just
experienced, letting her tears blot the pages.

EXT. ALLEY - TWO HOURS LATER

Trash blows along the filthy alley. Homeless people further
down towards the end of the alley are searching through the
trash for food.

The random coughs and mumbling from the homeless people is
heard.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1 and YOUNG GANGSTER #2, both of them
seventeen-years-old come walking from the other end of the
alley wearing all-red, smoking and shaking spray paint cans
looking at the graffiti on the walls, trying to find a good
spot to place their mark.

You can tell Young gangster #1 is nervous because of the
area they're in, knowing if they get caught it'll be the
end of their lives.

Young gangster #2 is nervous, but he won't let Young

gangster #1 notice it.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

Man, let's hurry up and do this.

Young gangster #2 takes a pull from his cigarette, looking at Young gangster #1 disappointed he came with him.

YOUNG GANGSTER #2

What are you scared of?

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

I ain't scared of shit. I just wanna hurry up so we can bounce.

YOUNG GANGSTER #2

Nigga, you scared, it's cool.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

Fuck you.

The two continue walking down the alley.

Young gangster #2 spots some gang graffiti on the wall they should cross out.

YOUNG GANGSTER #2

Let's get that shit over there.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

What?

Young gangster #2 points at what would appear to be a mural dedicated to someone who was killed.

YOUNG GANGSTER #2

That right there.

Young gangster #1 gets nervous, taking one last pull from his cigarette tossing it to the side.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

Man, I don't know about that. Let's just tag something else.

Young gangster #2 snatches Young gangster #1 can from his hand, shoving him to the side.

YOUNG GANGSTER #2

Move yo scary ass out the way. Wait till we get back in the hood. I'm telling everybody..

The bright headlights from a black van comes speeding down the alley, coming to a quick stop.

The two quickly run hiding behind a dumpster, making sure they can't be seen.

The door of the van is heard opening, followed with a loud thud against the trash.

The van door is heard closing, and then the van speeds off down the alley.

The two wait a few seconds before coming from behind the dumpster.

Young gangster #1 looks around paranoid, while Young gangster #2 is looking down the alley to see what made the loud thud.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

Let's get the fuck from over here.

YOUNG GANGSTER #2

Hold up. Don't you wanna see what they dumped?

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

Hell no. You can go look if you want. I'm getting the fuck on.

YOUNG GANGSTER #1

Fuck on.

Young gangster #1 takes off in the direction the van went.

Young gangster #2 brushes him off making his way down to the spot where the van stopped.

As he gets closer to the spot, he steps back scared

covering his mouth from hurling, before taking off trying to catch up with Young gangster #2

CLOSE UP REGINA'S BODY

We see Regina's body as we did in the beginning of the movie.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Life plays a funny twisted game with your emotions, drawing you closer to the person who can fully relate to your pain. The night I killed my father, Trice mother was found murdered and raped. Trice thinks the dude who beat my ass killed her, but the murderer was never found. This night created two paths for us to choose from.

FADE TO BLACK:

THREE YEARS LATER

THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Weed smoke lingers in the air as some rap music plays throughout the messy trap house.

Antoine has gained some weight, and his hair has grown longer.

He's sitting at the table covered with money, crack, weed, liquor bottles and cups.

Some older guys and GUY #1 are sitting at the table.

Antoine doesn't have on a shirt, just wearing his pants, looking at his cousin TAY mid-twenties standing over the stove with his back turned.

Tay is slim but on the muscular side, dark skin with no shirt on wearing jeans, showing off his body covered with tattoos.

TAY

Once you do this shit, ain't no turning back.

Antoine cracks his neck, sucking his teeth.

ANTOINE

Not trying to brag, because I'm not happy with the outcome. But aside from you, I'm the only real killer in this room.

Guy #1 mid-twenties, tall and dark skin, takes a pull from his blunt looking at Antoine sideways.

GUY #1

What the fuck you talking bout, lil nigga?

ANTOINE

Exactly what the fuck I said. I'm I supposed to be scared of you or some shit?

Guy #1 goes to reach under his shirt, and Antoine stands up prepared to rush over towards him, but the other guys at the table break it up.

Tay still has his back turned to them.

TAY

Both of y'all shut the fuck up, and calm down.

(To Antoine)

Are you using ice?

Antoine takes his seat keeping his eyes locked on Guy #1.

ANTOINE

I don't need ice.

Tay turns around holding a hot butter knife, walking over to Antoine.

TAY

Suit yourself.

He places the hot knife on Antoine's right arm.

Antoine bites down on his lip, but doesn't scream.

CUT TO:

INT. LATRICE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Latrice is sitting on her bed wearing black jogging pants and a T-Shirt crying, holding a roll of tissue.

As she rocks back and forth, Thomas comes into the room holding a pair of blood stained panties.

Latrice looks up at him with teary-eyes and Thomas just stares at her.

THOMAS

Looks like your period started. It won't be long now. You better find out what you need to do, and how you'll take care of that problem. More importantly, you need to invest in condoms. I'm not watching any of your whore babies.

He throws the panties at her, and then he turns his back walking away.

THOMAS CONT'D

Learn to hide your shit better if you don't want anybody finding out. You're just as sloppy as your mother.

He walks out slamming the door.

Latrice sits on the bed crying, lowering her head.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: DETROIT, MICHIGAN 1997

Now at age seventeen, Latrice is walking down the crowded hallway wearing something fitted, making her way to her locker.

When she reaches the locker, she opens it getting some books out.

Closing the locker, she turns to walk away and TRAVIS a tall light skin pretty boy comes walking up wearing some flashy clothes with a big smile on his face.

Latrice looks at him trying not to blush, but his good looks makes it hard for her.

TRAVIS

What's going on, baby?

LATRICE

I'm your baby now?

TRAVIS

You've always been my baby. Everybody knows who I'm trying to get at.

LATRICE

Uh huh. What do you want?

TRAVIS

I was wondering if...

Travis eyes widen, lowering his head sighing.

Latrice looks at him confused.

LATRICE

What's wrong?

Travis keeps his head down.

TRAVIS

Guess.

She turns looking, and coming down the hall is Antoine in his Blue shirt and jeans, making his way towards her, giving everybody a play he walks pass.

He reaches Latrice wrapping an arm around her, giving her a kiss on the cheek, making her blush.

ANTOINE

What's up?

LATRICE

Why didn't I see you in homeroom?

ANTOINE

I didn't get much sleep last night.

Antoine looks at Travis with his head still down, and then at Latrice.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

What's wrong with ya boy?

Travis lifts his head with a mean mug.

TRAVIS

I can speak for myself.

Antoine cocks his head to the side.

ANTOINE

I didn't say you couldn't.

TRAVIS

If you're questioning something about me,
speak to me.

Antoine moves Latrice to the side, stepping up in Travis
face.

ANTOINE

Stand behind ya feelings, nigga.

Everyone stops thinking it's about to be a fight.

Latrice quickly gets between them defusing the situation.

A thunderous boo is heard, and everybody starts walking
off.

Antoine and Travis continue griming each other.

LATRICE

Look, don't start---

ANTOINE

Get yo ass to class, and stop fucking with
lames. You need a ride home?

Latrice just shakes her head.

LATRICE

I'm good.

ANTOINE

I'll holla at you later.

Antoine mean mugs Travis as he walks off.

Travis watches Antoine walk off, and then turns his attention to Latrice.

TRAVIS

What's wrong with that nigga?

LATRICE

He's basically been there for me my whole life. He makes sure I'm safe.

TRAVIS

He gon' fuck around and get his ass beat.

Latrice catches herself from laughing.

Travis becomes more upset.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

LATRICE

Leave that alone. What did you wanna talk about?

The students start clearing out as the bell rings.

TRAVIS

The shit we talked about on the phone.

Latrice blushes stepping into him, grabbing his crotch.

LATRICE

Let's go.

Travis cracks a smile, but then he looks around, unsure if Antoine is still around.

TRAVIS

What about yo boy?

Turning her back, she reaches back grabbing him by the belt.

LATRICE

Keep your mouth shut and he won't know.

Travis has a big smile on his face as the two walk off.

CUT TO:

INT. TAY'S CAR - NIGHT

Tay and Antoine are sitting in Tay's old-school Jet-black Monte Carlo across the street from the spot, drinking and smoking.

TAY

After I make this move tonight cuz, we gon' be straight.

ANTOINE

You've been saying that shit all year. I'll believe it when I see it.

Tay takes a pull from the blunt, following it with a sip from his cup.

TAY

Watch what I tell ya. You'll see when I come up outta here.

ANTOINE

Hurry up.

TAY

Hurry up? Nigga, you act like you got something else to do.

ANTOINE

I do.

TAY

What? Check in on Trice?

Tay laughs.

Antoine takes a sip from his cup, giving him the finger.

TAY (CONT'D)

I'll let you sit and be pissed.

(Laughs)

I'll be right back.

Tay takes one last pull from the blunt, placing it down in the ashtray before getting out the car.

Antoine picks up the blunt taking a hit, leaning back in his seat looking at Tay walk across the street to the house that looks abandon.

Reaching the door, Tay knocks one time, and three loud gunshots follow, knocking Tay down the steps.

Antoine drops the blunt stunned, reaching on the side of his seat for his gun getting out the car.

Guy #1 and two other guys come running out the house down to Tay still moving around in pain.

They aim down at him ready to shoot, and Antoine opens fire causing them to duck to the ground returning fire.

Antoine ducks behind the car as the glass from the bullets shattering the window falls on him.

The three quickly get up making their way to an old Honda getting in.

Antoine comes from behind the car opening fire, just as the car takes off.

Antoine stands in the middle of the street pissed he didn't hit anybody.

He turns his attention to his cousin, running over dropping down to one knee.

Tay has blood coming from his mouth and chest, struggling to catch a breath.

ANTOINE

Just breathe. Breathe, you'll be okay.

TAY

...That...that bitch ass nigga set me up.

Those were the last words coming from Tay's mouth, before his soul passes on.

Tears fall from Antoine's eyes onto his cousin face, grabbing the back of his head placing his forehead against his, trying to deal with the pain.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Needles to say, homeboy was murdered not to long after this. The cards dealt to me and Trice could've been played different, but this is the path fate wanted us to embrace. At any moment, we can change the way we live. But...you can't change what doesn't want to change. Now that we're all caught up...here's where we stand now.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. HURON VALLEY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - AFTERNOON

Talking from other inmates can be heard echoing throughout the prison.

Tionna now covered with tattoos and sweat has her feet on the bottom bunk doing pushups.

Anger etches her face going hard non-stop, breathing rage.

Taking a break, she stands up wiping the sweat from her face, before turning looking at the wall with pictures of Young Antoine, reminiscing on the last time she's seen her son.

Walking to the wall, she places her fingertips on a picture of him and her when he was baby, and you can tell by the way her fingers move across the picture, she hates the fact she can't be with her son, but she understands her decision was for the best.

Closing her eyes ready to cry, a guard comes to her cell.

GUARD

You got a visitor, Tionna.

As the cell door opens, she takes a deep breath looking towards the open cell in confusion, wondering who would possibly be here to see her.

Working her shoulders out as if she's about to fight, Tionna stares at the picture one last time, cracking a slight smile, wiping the tear that was about to fall from her eye, before making her way out the cell.

Tionna and the guard make their way to the visiting room.

Wearing a royal blue wife beater and shorts, Antoine is sitting at the booth with the phone already up to his ear with his head down.

When Tionna comes up to the booth, her heart drops seeing her son.

She quickly takes her seat, picking up the phone placing it to her ear.

TIONNA

Hey baby.

ANTOINE

Hi ma.

TIONNA

What's wrong? Why your head down?

ANTOINE

No reason.

TIONNA

Tell me. Are you scared to look me in the eyes?

ANTOINE

I'm not scared. I'm ashamed.

She eyes over his tattoos and brand on his arm.

TIONNA

Reading the story on your body, you can't be too ashamed.

ANTOINE

...I'm ashamed---

TIONNA

Before you say another word, look me in the eyes.

ANTOINE

...I can't.

TIONNA

I haven't seen my only child in years. Either you look me in the eyes or this conversation is over.

Antoine snuffles, slowly raising his head looking at his mother with glossy red eyes.

Tionna cracks a slight smile.

TIONNA (CONT'D)

Why does my big man have tears in his eyes?

Antoine doesn't respond wiping his eyes, seeing his mother is still just as beautiful as he remembers.

TIONNA (CONT'D)

I remember my son being tough. What were the last words I told you?

ANTOINE

That was then.

TIONNA

What's so different now?

ANTOINE

...The woman I love is behind bars.

TIONNA

My body is behind bars. My love and spirit is always with you.

ANTOINE

That's not the same, ma.

TIONNA

Is that what you're ashamed about?

ANTOINE

No. I'm ashamed of me.

TIONNA

Antoine...this had to be done. I have no regrets.

ANTOINE

I do.

TIONNA

How's Latrice?

ANTOINE

Aside from when I wrote you telling you about her mother getting murdered, she's okay.

TIONNA

Be ashamed if you let her become her mother. I'm comfortable in my situation, so you should have no guilt in your heart. I'll always love you.

The words touch his heart as the tears fall from his eyes, wishing he could give his mother a hug.

ANTOINE

I love you, too.

Tionna looks back at the Guard, and then Antoine.

TIONNA

My time is almost up. Come back and see me again. Remember what I told you.

ANTOINE

I will.

TIONNA

Son, stop crying. You only shed tears for lost loved ones. Not for doing what you had to do. I love you.

Wiping the tears from her eyes, she places the phone back on the hook, looking at her son one last time, before standing up walking away.

Antoine is trying to man up wiping his tears, still holding the receiver, savoring the words from his mother.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - THE KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The blinds over the sink are open so the sun can come in.

Music is heard coming from the radio sitting on the counter.

The floor is clean, and the wooden table is setup for when Latrice and Thomas get ready for dinner.

Latrice is standing over the sink washing dishes wearing a tank top and some shorts with her hair in a ponytail.

You can see she's having a good day from the smile on her face, and the way she's nodding her head.

Finishing up with the last few dishes placing them in the rack, she walks over to the refrigerator covered with pictures of her mother and her obituary.

Despite her mother treated her like shit, she still loved her with all her heart, placing a hand on the obituary closing her eyes, thinking back on the good times before she turned into the evil woman she died as.

With happiness running through her mind, she opens her eyes.

She opens the refrigerator grabbing two packs of steak, closing the door.

Walking back over to the sink, she opens the steaks, and then grabs a cutting board placing them on it.

Ready to season and tenderize the meat, Thomas comes into

the kitchen wearing his chef uniform, pausing staring at her.

Latrice looks over at him smiling.

LATRICE

You ready to eat?

Thomas stares at her for a few more seconds, before sucking his teeth walking over to the refrigerator.

THOMAS

What are you trying to make?

Hurt her father would speak to her that way, she places her hands on the counter taking a deep breath, trying not to cry.

Thomas grabs a beer from the refrigerator placing it on the table, and then he reaches back in grabbing a cold water bottle.

Opening the water, he turns looking at her taking a sip.

Keeping her back to him, she takes another deep breath before responding.

LATRICE

I'm making steak and mashed potato's, with a salad.

THOMAS

Something basic, just like your mother.

He looks back at the pictures of Regina on the refrigerator, snatching the obituary down.

Staring at the picture he scoffs, tossing it on the floor.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I wonder if you picked up the rest of her traits.

Fed up with the way he's talking to her, she slams her fist on the counter turning to look at him.

LATRICE

Why do you talk to me that way? We both know what mama was doing, but that doesn't mean I'll be the same. Why do you disrespect me every single day?

THOMAS

(Laughs)

Disrespect you?

(Sip)

You disrespect yourself being a whore like your mother. Blame yourself for your actions.

LATRICE

Blame myself? You're my fucking father! The man that's supposed to guide me through this fucked up world, making sure I don't take that path! What kind of man or father figure are you, telling me to blame myself?! Don't you think that's fucked up?

He's silent, lowering his head ashamed.

LATRICE (CONT'D)

I don't mean to disrespect you by cussing, but this has to end. I'm your daughter and I love you. All I want is for my father to love me the same.

Her lips tremble, hurt she had to have this discussion with her father, closing her eyes letting the tears fall.

Lifting his head seeing his child crying, the guilt surges through his body walking over towards her, placing a hand on her shoulder.

THOMAS

I'm sorry.

The tears continue pouring from her eyes, lifting her head sniffing.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I've been taking my anger out on you.
You're my child, and I shouldn't behave
this way. From here on out, I'll never
disrespect you again.

He gives her a warming fatherly smile.

Just as she gets ready to smile, he slaps her so hard it
almost slams her head into the sink.

Thomas face is etched with pure hate, grabbing her by the
arm, slinging her to the floor.

Latrice lies on the floor on her side crying, covering her
face feeling disgraced.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I should've been treating you like I did
your mother. Whores love talking back,
knowing they're only worth a few pumps by
any man who sees fit.

He pours the rest of the water on her, and then slings the
bottle down on her head.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm sure you love this by more than one
man at the same time, so get your dirty
ass up and make dinner. I'm hungry.

Stepping over her as if she's a piece of trash, Thomas
grabs his beer from the table and then walks out the
kitchen.

Slowly sitting up on her knees, Latrice whimpers wiping the
water from her face.

Standing to her feet, she grabs her phone from the counter
continuing to cry as she dials a number.

She tries gathering herself before the person on the other
end answers.

JASON (V.O.)

What up?

LATRICE

What are you doing?

JASON (V.O.)

Shit, chillin' with my boys. What's going on?

LATRICE

Are y'all drinking?

JASON (V.O.)

Yeah, and we can get some more. Are you coming out?

LATRICE

Yeah, come pick me up.

JASON (V.O.)

What are we doing?

LATRICE

Let me get a few drinks first, and then we can talk about.

JASON (V.O.)

Be there in twenty.

She hangs up sniffing, rubbing the side of her face.

Knowing what Jason has in mind, she sucks it up as a benefit to block out what she just experienced.

She walks out the kitchen to go get ready.

EXT. THE BLOCK - NIGHT

Loud music is coming from the cars parked in front of the spot that could use a new paint job, along with the stairs getting repaired.

People are standing on the sidewalk drinking, smoking and talking shit having a good time.

Some people are off to the side rapping, while others are shooting dice.

Some more people are sitting on the porch laughing, drinking and smoking.

Liquor bottles and beer cans are resting off to the side.

Amongst the people is Antoine's friend DREW, early-twenties. He's brown skin, short and stocky.

Antoine is standing off to the side smoking a cigarette, holding a cup of liquor laughing at the conversation going on.

Antoine's hair is down resting on his shoulders giving him a seductive look going along with his white wife beater and jeans.

Also sitting on the porch is ANDRE, dark skin and lanky, known for starting shit, but never gets involved until the end getting his few cheap shots in. He's smoking a blunt laughing along with everybody else.

ANTOINE

It's more niggas than hoes out here. What type of shit is this?

DREW

What are you talking about? You don't see all those bitches down there?

Antoine takes a sip from his cup looking down at the girls smoking and drinking dancing up on guys.

Some of them are sandwiched between two guys getting groped, and then there are the ones down on their knees sticking their tongues out in front of guys leaning up against the cars.

Looking back at Drew, Antoine scoffs.

ANTOINE

Runner hoes down there. Knock ya self out with them infected bitches.

Drew laughs taking a sip.

DREW

Pussy is pussy. That's what they made condoms for.

ANTOINE

Bitches burn through those.

Andre takes a pull from his blunt holding the smoke in.

ANDRE

Drew, you know what type of girls this nigga like.

Antoine and Drew turn looking at him.

ANTOINE

What type?

ANDRE

(Exhales)

The ones like your girl Trice.

ANTOINE

And what type is that?

ANDRE

You know.

ANTOINE

Nah fam, I don't. I need you to tell me.

ANDRE

Hoes needing protection by niggas like you.

Everybody on the porch breaks out laughing.

Drew takes a sip from his cup, trying not to laugh.

Antoine stares dead at Andre sucking his teeth, balling his fist cracking his knuckles.

ANTOINE

Hoes needing protection?

ANDRE

(Laughs)

Hell yeah. You might as well call your
flag a cape, the way you fly to save that
hoe.

Everybody continues laughing.

Antoine sips his cup preparing to hit Andre dead in the
mouth, when his phone rings.

Still pondering on hitting Andre, he pulls his flip phone
out answering, keeping his eyes locked on Andre.

ANTOINE

(Into the phone)

Hello.

The person on the other end can barely be heard from all
the laughter and talking on the porch.

Antoine moves down from the porch.

ANDRE

There he goes. That must be her calling.

Antoine looks back at the porch nodding his head, focusing
back on the phone call.

ANTOINE

(Into the phone)

I'm sorry, can you speak up?

WARDEN (V.O.)

I'm calling from Huron valley correctional
facility. Is this Antoine Pryce?

ANTOINE

(Into the phone)

This is him.

WARDEN (V.O.)

I'm calling about your mother, Tionna.

ANTOINE

(Into the phone)

I was there earlier. Is she okay?

WARDEN (V.O.)

I don't know how to tell you this.

The words make Antoine's stomach feel flaky.

ANTOINE

(Into the phone)

Tell me what?

WARDEN (V.O.)

Your mother was murdered tonight. She was found in the shower.

ANTOINE

(Into the phone)

...What?

WARDEN (V.O.)

We don't know who committed the crime, but we're...

The phone falls from his hand. Antoine's eyes are wide...his expression shows disbelief, breathing shallow. Everything around him goes mute.

Drew is laughing taking a sip from his cup.

He looks down at the sidewalk seeing Antoine froze.

Worried about his friend, he gets up from the porch walking down to him, shaking his arm.

Antoine is still frozen, not responding.

DREW

Cuz. Cuz, you good?

Antoine doesn't blink or budge.

Drew's words aren't registering with him, still thinking about the heartbreaking news he just heard.

DREW (CONT'D)

What the fuck is wrong you, cuz? Talk to me, nigga.

Andre takes a sip from his cup laughing, looking down at Antoine and Drew.

ANDRE

He got that call, and now he mad, wondering why he's defending a hoe.

Drew gets upset looking back at Andre.

DREW

What the fuck is wrong with you? Why would you say some bullshit like that?

ANDRE

Come on, fam, you know that shit true. She a hoe and he protect that bitch with his life. Sad part about it all is he ain't even fuck the bitch. Does that make sense to you?

DREW

Man, you fucked up.

ANDRE

You know I'm right, it's cool. That's yo nigga, so you'll side with him regardless.

Antoine comes from his trance still showing no expression looking at Drew, tapping him on the chest, releasing a soft chuckle.

Drew looks at Antoine confused.

DREW

What's up? Who was on the phone?

ANTOINE

I'm good. It's was a nigga, just like homie said. He's right. I need to stop defending a hoe.

Drew looks at Antoine confused, because he would never agree with Latrice getting disrespected.

DREW

Are you serious?

ANTOINE

Yeah.

DREW

You never let anybody talk about Trice like that.

Antoine smiles patting Drew on the shoulder.

ANTOINE

Fam makes a point. Let's just drink. I'm feeling what he said.

Antoine walks on the porch grabbing another cup, picking up the fifths of gin beginning to pour.

ANDRE

I'm glad you came to your senses. Because had you kept protecting that bitch...

Antoine grips the bottle tight, turning around smacking Andre across the face shattering it, knocking him off the porch.

Everyone stops what they're doing, focusing on Antoine holding the neck end of the shattered bottle, making his way down to Andre.

Andre is on the ground moaning in pain with blood dripping from the right side of his face.

Tossing the glass to the side, Antoine kicks him a few times in the face, before grabbing him by the collar, dragging him to the side of the house banging his head against the bricks.

Everybody rushes over watching the beating, cheering the fight on.

Antoine lets him go.

Andre's face is covered with blood.

From the looks of it, it appears he's not breathing.

Just as Antoine gets ready to grab a brick and smash his face in, Drew rushes over grabbing him.

DREW

Cuz, calm the fuck down! It's over.

Antoine stares at Andre with hate in his eyes, watching the blood spill down his face.

Dropping the brick, Antoine looks at Drew.

DREW (CONT'D)

What the fuck is wrong with you?

Antoine shoves through Drew, walking over to the garbage can grabbing it, rolling it back over to Andre's unconscious body.

Everybody is still watching, as Antoine places the can down on the side opening the lid.

He grabs Andre by the ankles slowly placing him inside.

Once he's inside, Antoine picks the can back upward, closing the lid.

Everyone laughs.

Drew stares at Antoine like he's crazy.

ANTOINE

What?

DREW

What? You possibly killed this nigga, and you talking about, what?

Antoine steps into Dre.

Drew gets into a fighting stance, not sure what Antoine

might do.

ANTOINE

The woman who gave me life, who I haven't seen in years until today was murdered. Do you think I give a fuck about this bitch ass nigga life?

Antoine kicks the can knocking it over.

Everybody goes silent, slowly moving back.

Drew's face drops, now understanding the rage inside of Antoine.

DREW

...I didn't---

ANTOINE

Of course you didn't know. But now you do. That's why this bitch is in the garbage. Find something to do with him.

Antoine turns his back walking away.

Everybody steps to the side.

DREW

Where you going, Cuz?

Antoine continues walking, not looking back.

Drew shakes his head pulling out a cigarette lighting it, looking at the tilted over garbage can seeing Andre's bloody face, and his body twitching just enough to let people know he's alive.

Now finding humor in the situation, Drew takes a pull from his cigarette laughing, walking back to the porch finishing drinking.

EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Antoine is sitting on the porch smoking a cigarette with his head down, frustrated about the death of his mother and the fact Latrice isn't home.

A tan old-school Caprice with tinted windows comes pulling

up.

Antoine looks up with his red eyes taking a pull from his cigarette, watching Latrice get out the car.

Throwing his cigarette to the side, he rushes over to her grabbing her by the arm.

She looks at him terrified, confused why he's so angry.

ANTOINE

Who the fuck is this?

LATRICE

Antoine---

JASON (O.S.)

Who the fuck is this nigga?!

Antoine moves Latrice to the side looking in the car.

ANTOINE

Mind yo motherfuckin' business, bitch!

Slamming the door, Antoine grabs Latrice by the arm pulling her to the porch.

JASON, mid-twenties, tall, muscular and dark skin gets out the car wearing a T-Shirt and shorts, making his way towards the house.

Antoine turns looking at him.

JASON

Who the fuck...

Antoine pulls a nine-millimeter from under his shirt aiming at him.

Jason puts his hands up in fear, slowly stepping back.

ANTOINE

Get yo happy to get some pussy ass back in the car, bitch!

Antoine lets off three shots in the air.

Jason quickly runs back to his car getting in, peeling off into the night.

Antoine focuses his attention back on Latrice.

She's staring at him in fear for her life, because she's never seen this side of him before.

Just as he gets ready to speak, Thomas rushes out the house in a wife beater and jeans, holding a bottle of whiskey.

Antoine aims the gun at him.

Thomas freezes, putting his hands in the air.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Take yo ass back in the house, bitch! It's because of you she's out here giving away pussy! And I don't give a fuck if you or anybody else on this block calls the police, because if I get arrested, I'm having my homies come back and light this bitch up!

Thomas runs back in the house.

Placing the gun back under his shirt, he looks at Latrice.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Who the fuck was that nigga?!

Her voice trembles the exact way her body is trembling.

LATRICE

Just somebody I know.

ANTOINE

Somebody you know or somebody you fucking?

LATRICE

He's somebody---

ANTOINE

You're fucking! That nigga was right. Why do I bother helping you and you're a hoe?! Let me get the fuck on.

He turns his back walking away, and she grabs his arm making him turn around.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Why the fuck are you touching me?!

LATRICE

What is wrong with you?

ANTOINE

Aside from the shit you do? It really hurts me my mother's last words I can't uphold, because you're still a hoe.

Latrice becomes confused, staring into his eyes filled with pain.

LATRICE

What do you mean her last words?

ANTOINE

My mother is dead. My mother is dead, and she wanted me to make sure you don't turn out like your mother. I'm pissed at myself for thinking I could do it.

Latrice grabs his hand, and he gets ready to snatch away, but she holds it tighter.

LATRICE

Listen to me. I'm nothing like my mother.

He quickly snatches away.

ANTOINE

You're nothing like your mother? The nigga that just left wasn't your man. No nigga you fucked with was your man. The only difference between you and her is she got paid for it.

With tears building in her eyes, she hauls back slapping the shit out of Antoine.

LATRICE

I know you're in pain, and I understand.
But don't disrespect me or my mother! You
have no idea what type of abuse I go
through on a daily from my father! Yes, I
fuck niggas! It helps me block what he
says.

Antoine looks at her rubbing his cheek, shaking his head
disappointed.

ANTOINE

...So, doing exactly what he labels you as
is the right thing to do, so you can feel
at peace?

With a straight face, she looks him dead in his eyes.

LATRICE

Yup.

Raising his eyebrow, shrugging his shoulders, he releases a
low chuckle.

ANTOINE

That makes a lot of sense.

LATRICE

Fuck you, Antoine.

ANTOINE

No, Trice. Fuck you.

He turns his back walking away.

LATRICE

Fuck you! Who do you think you are, coming
here judging somebody! You're not perfect!

Antoine continues walking.

ANTOINE

Don't get raped and end up like your
mother.

Heated with anger, she grabs some rocks throwing them at him.

One of the rocks hit him, but he keeps walking.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Hoes always do shit behind your back.

Latrice stands with tears coming down her face disrespected her only friend would talk to her that way.

CLOSE UP LATRICE'S FACE

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Maybe what I said was wrong. Maybe it'll help in days to come. All I know...I can't focus on someone who doesn't want change, indulging in what shames them. Either way...if it's meant for us to remain friends we'll get over it like everything else. If not...a good friendship just faded to black.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. THE CEMETERY - AFTERNOON

The sky is gray with a nice breeze blowing, indicating there's a chance of rain.

Silence cloaks the area of peace, allowing the people scattered about to mourn their lost loved ones in peace.

ANGLE ON--

Antoine wearing a T-shirt and jeans holding a bottle of Remy standing over his mother's black headstone with her picture engraved on it.

There's no emotion on his face staring at the picture.

The crisp breeze blows pass, and yet he doesn't blink or show any sign of emotion, continuing to stare.

Moistening his lips, he strokes down his goatee.

A soft sigh comes from his mouth.

Latrice walks up in a normal shirt and jeans standing beside him, placing her hand on his shoulder.

Antoine remains focused staring at the headstone.

LATRICE

Are you okay?

ANTOINE

I don't know yet. What are you doing here?

LATRICE

Auntie told me I could find you here. Your pain is my pain.

ANTOINE

...Not in this case.

LATRICE

What do you mean?

ANTOINE

She's in the ground because of me.

LATRICE

What happened has nothing to do with you.

ANTOINE

...You think so?

LATRICE

Yes. Cruel people murdered your mother,
not you.

Placing the bottle down, he goes in his pocket pulling out a pack of Newports opening the box, pulling out a cigarette and his blue Bic lighter.

Placing the pack back, he places the one he pulled out in his mouth lighting it taking a calm pull shaking his head, still avoiding eye contact with Latrice.

ANTOINE

Trice...how long have we been friends?

LATRICE

From day one we had an unbreakable bond.

ANTOINE

We never hid secrets from the other. We were always there for each other, right?

LATRICE

Right.

ANTOINE

Well...this is something I have to keep from you.

LATRICE

What is it?

He takes a pull shaking his head because he wants to tell her, but he's not certain how she'll look at him after the fact.

ANTOINE

I can't tell you, Trice. You might look at me different.

Concerned about the secret her only real friend is keeping, she steps in front of him looking in his eyes.

LATRICE

As much as we've been through together, I'll never look at you different.

Taking a pull from his cigarette, he exhales the smoke sighing, knowing in his mind this could possibly change their relationship.

ANTOINE

You know why she went to jail, right?

LATRICE

She murdered your father because of the abuse.

ANTOINE

...She didn't do it.

LATRICE

What?

ANTOINE

Remember the night I fought ole boy your mom was messing around with for disrespecting you?

LATRICE

Yeah.

ANTOINE

When I got home...my mother and father got into it. I tried pulling him off, but it didn't work. I sat inches away watching the blood and tears roll down my mother's face with each punch he landed. In my mind, I decided there was only one way I could stop him.

LATRICE

Antoine---

ANTOINE

I ran to the bedroom grabbing my mother's gun from the nightstand. When I came back, he looked me dead in the eyes and laughed. He said..."Bitches shouldn't play with guns."

(Takes a pull)

That was the first and last time I was ever called a bitch.

Latrice is silent, unable to form the right words to respond.

Antoine takes another pull looking at Latrice with sorrow in his eyes.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

So, like I said. She's in the ground because of me. Had I stayed and took what was coming to me like a man...she wouldn't be in the ground.

He snuffles taking a pull.

LATRICE

She made a choice. She wanted her son to live life free instead of behind bars. Any mother would've done the same.

Antoine takes his last pull, flicking the cigarette to the side.

ANTOINE

I'd rather be in jail instead of looking at the earth my mother is buried under. I have no reason to love or live anymore.

He lowers his head, and the tears start falling.

The pain in Latrice is unbearable seeing her best friend crying for the first time.

Stepping into him, she embraces him with a loving hug rubbing his back.

LATRICE

You still have me. I'll always be here for you. I love you.

No longer able to hold back the pain, he breaks down crying holding her tight.

As the rain pours down, he doesn't let her go, because she's the only woman left in this world he'll forever love, keeping his promise, making sure nothing happens to her.

Slowly letting her go, they look into each others eyes holding hands as the tears mix with the rain seeing genuine love.

He rubs his thumb across her cheek, slowly moving in for a kiss.

Before his lips connects with hers she closes her eyes

ready to enjoy the moment she's been wanting since they were kids.

Holding each other like lovers, they kiss passionately.

They slowly pull away from each other.

Both of them are in bliss, finally knowing what true love feels like staring into the others eyes.

ANTOINE

Go wait in the car with Drew. I'll be there in a minute.

With a smile, she rubs her hand across his face before walking off.

Antoine turns his head watching her walk away.

A slight smile cracks the side of his mouth, before looking back at the headstone.

Taking a seat on the ground, he opens the bottle taking a sip.

He wipes the residue from his mouth swallowing, rubbing his hand across the headstone.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

I know you said your decision was for the best...but I can't sleep knowing it's my fault you're dead. Wherever you are, please forgive me. Our time shouldn't have ended this way.

He takes another sip from the bottle.

He places the bottle to the side wiping the tears and rain from his face.

Lying down on the ground on his side, he stares at the headstone crying, rubbing his hand across it in a loving manner, trying to grasp the fact he'll never see his mother again.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

I hope you're truly with me. I can't make it without you. I love you.

He stays on the ground as the rain pours down, and the tears pour down his face, keeping his hand on the headstone as if he can feel his mother holding him.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

They say love hurts more than death because the loss of a loved one is death. A soul taken away is replaced with another. A part of me wishes I could be Trice man. But...I know it can never be. All I can do is what my mother asked, making sure she's safe. Mother, please...help me so I can do what you asked.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. THE HOTEL - NIGHT

A porno is playing on mute on the wall flat screen. A half bottle of Hennessy is on the counter next to two red cups.

Male and women clothing can be seen on the floor.

The sound of the headboard knocking against the wall is heard, along with loud moans coming from a man.

On the bed glistening with sweat putting power behind each stroke is a brown skin man in his mid-thirties named KEVIN.

He has Latrice bent over gripping hold tight to her thighs as if he's clinging for dear life.

With her head turned to the side, the expression shows she wishes he would hurry up and finish.

Closing her eyes biting her lip, she slides her head side to side on the pillow.

KEVIN

This is some good pussy.

She squeezes her eyes tight, and tears of shame flow.

Kevin's moans become louder and his movement becomes faster releasing a loud orgasmic moan.

The sweat drips from his face onto her back, gaining his composure rolling over to the side.

She lies silent on her stomach shaking her head, dreading

she's become the exact thing she hated about her mother.

Kevin lies grinning wiping the sweat from his face,
breathing heavy.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

That shit was good.

She doesn't respond sitting up grabbing her bra from the
floor placing it on.

He turns on his side placing his fingertips to her back
gliding them down.

She jumps back turning to look at him as if something eerie
crawled on her.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

She stands up placing her panties on.

LATRICE

I need to get going.

KEVIN

When are we doing this again?

Placing her pants on, she looks around for her shirt paying
him no attention.

LATRICE

Who said we're doing it again?

Finding her shirt, she places it on walking towards the
door.

Kevin sits up with an attitude.

KEVIN

Like that?

LATRICE

I'm out.

KEVIN

Fuck you then, bitch! You were only good
to get a nut.

Opening the door pausing, she turns around looking at him.

LATRICE

And you still wanna fuck this bitch. I
can't say fucking you was worth the time,
but make sure you tell your wife you
fucked a bitch that can get her husband
off better than she can.

Releasing a low chuckle, she walks out the room.

Kevin sits on the bed looking dumb, rubbing his wedding
ring with sorrow.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Coming from the room of the rundown looking motel with the
lights dim and the vacancy sign blinking on and off,
Latrice takes a deep breath making her way through the
parking lot heading to the street.

As she walks down the empty street barely lit by
streetlights and the breeze massaging her back, she comes
to a stop at a bus booth walking in taking a seat.

Her breathing indicates she wants to break down crying,
feeling ashamed of yet another pointless sexual encounter
causing the empty hole in her heart to grow deeper.

Gaining a grip, she looks around the area hearing loud
talking, seeing four boys standing by a gas station.

Taking another deep breath, she pulls her phone out looking
at the screen seeing four missed calls from Antoine.

Knowing he's about to give her the third-degree, she braces
for his words calling him back.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Where yo ass been at?!

LATRICE

I was busy.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

You were busy for four hours?

LATRICE

Do we have to do this, now?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Hell yeah!

LATRICE

This was something I had to do.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Where yo ass at?

LATRICE

Waiting on the bus, praying these loud ass niggas don't come over here.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

You need to have yo ass in the house.

LATRICE

Okay, daddy.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Just get home safe. Can you do that for me?

LATRICE

Don't I always?

TEENAGE BOY (O.S.)

Look at that bitch over there!

Latrice shakes her head sighing, looking towards the gas station seeing the boys focusing their attention her way.

LATRICE

Here we go.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What?

Latrice stands up coming out the booth keeping her eyes on the boys approaching her.

LATRICE

Here they come.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

You need to move.

LATRICE

I'm good.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Get yo ass up and move.

LATRICE

Being overprotective over the phone won't help in this situation.

Now we see Travis, two other boys and MARCUS. He's short and dark skin with a stocky build.

A cigarette hangs from his mouth staring at Latrice with bad intentions.

Latrice looks back and sees the headlights from the bus a few streets down.

Turning back to face the group, she sighs deep.

TRAVIS

Oh, this Latrice freak ass.

MARCUS

You know her?

TRAVIS

Yeah. We go to school together.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What's going on? Why you get quiet?

LATRICE

(Whispers)

I'll call you when I get on the bus.

ANTONIE (V.O.)

Trice!

She hangs up placing the phone back in her pocket.

MARCUS

Is the pussy good?

TRAVIS

The pussy is good. Trice, let my man get some of that.

LATRICE

Fuck you, nigga! I don't know why I fucked with yo ass in the first place.

TRAVIS

Bitch, are you giving up the pussy or what?

LATRICE

Fuck you bum ass niggas!

Marcus takes one more pull from his cigarette before flicking it to the side, placing his hand under his shirt grabbing the handle of a nine-millimeter.

MARCUS

Bitch, make me...

The bus pulls up opening the doors and she quickly hops on.

But before the doors close, Marcus slaps her hard on the ass making her stumble forward.

MARCUS

I'll see you again, you freak bitch!

The bus pulls off.

The faint laughter of the boys can still be heard, until they cross a few streets.

The BUS DRIVER looks at Latrice concerned as she swipes her card.

BUS DRIVER

Are you okay?

Latrice looks at him trying to hold back the pain from getting slapped on the ass, and how embarrassing it was.

LATRICE

I'll be fine.

The only other person on the bus is a BAG LADY wearing flea market clothes and her purse beside her.

She's gazing out the window, sitting at the back of the bus where Latrice is heading.

Latrice takes a seat sighing, placing her hands over her face.

The Bag lady turns looking at her sensing the pain becoming concerned, slowly extended her hand.

Latrice pulls her hands down.

When she sees the lady about to touch her, she jumps back.

LATRICE

Don't touch me.

The Bag lady pulls her hand back hurt by the way Latrice reacted.

BAG LADY

I wasn't about to do you harm, dear. I just noticed you're---

LATRICE

How about you mind your own business?
Notice that.

BAG LADY

I wanted to give you some advice, so you
don't end up like me.

LATRICE

I highly doubt I end up like you.

BAG LADY

I hope not.

Completely disrespecting the concern the Bag lady has for
her, Latrice pulls out her phone texting.

The Bag lady goes in her purse scrambling around for a few
seconds, pulling out a card staring in love all over again.

BAG LADY

If you don't mind, I'd like to give you
something.

Latrice looks at the filth under her nails, and the beat up
condition her hands are in, scrunching up her face.

LATRICE

You expect me to take something from your
hand?

The Bag lady sighs, placing the card beside Latrice leg.

The Bag lady turns looking out the window, reaching up
pulling the cord ringing the bell.

She looks back at Latrice still texting, shaking her head
disappointed.

BAG LADY

I know my appearance is the reason why
you're acting this way. But if you take a
look at the card, it'll help you be a
better woman in life. Take a look at me.
You can tell I know. I wish I would've

stayed with the person who gave me the card, instead of doing exactly what you're doing now.

Latrice looks over at her scoffing, returning back to her text message.

LATRICE

I hear you talking.

BAG LADY

Don't be so cold, dear.

LATRICE

You should keep the card your boyfriend gave you.

BAG LADY

I wish I could go back and accept his proposal.

LATRICE

Well, I don't know what to tell you. I don't need help with my life.

The bus comes to a stop.

The Bag lady gets up walking to the door, turning looking at Latrice one last time.

BAG LADY

Don't wait till it's too late to change.

The Bag lady makes her way off the bus.

The bus pulls off.

Using her eyes, Latrice looks at the card hesitant to pick it up, but curiosity gets the best of her.

Before she can get a chance to read what the card says, her phone goes off.

It's a text from Antoine.

INSERT PHONE SCREEN

On some real shit, you need to hurry up and call me.

She places her phone down, turning her attention back to the card.

INSERT CARD

If I were to tell you you're a rose and I'll treat you as one. Would you accept that's what you are?

She stares at the card as if she's trying to decipher what it means, but in the back of her mind she's registering what the Bag lady meant.

Placing the card in her pocket, she pulls her earbuds out connecting them to her phone listening to music.

CUT TO:

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house is clean spick and span, with everything arranged perfect on the glass table.

Thomas is sitting on the sofa in a suit watching the basketball game drinking a beer, sucking his teeth, turning his head looking at the front door every few seconds.

Looking at his expression, you can tell he can't wait for Latrice to walk through the door so he can say some hateful words towards her.

Latrice comes in closing the door behind her, taking her earbuds out ready to go upstairs.

Thomas turns looking at her taking a sip from his beer.

THOMAS

Where you been?

LATRICE

I was studying at the library. I couldn't get a ride home, so I had to catch the bus.

Taking a sip from his beer, he stares at her seeing through her lie.

THOMAS

And I'm supposed to believe that?

LATRICE

Why wouldn't you, and I'm telling the truth?

Focusing his attention back to the game, he takes another sip sucking his teeth.

THOMAS

Go about ya business. You're a whore like your mother.

She sighs.

LATRICE

Don't you think that's getting old?

Thomas takes another sip from his beer, keeping his eyes locked on the screen.

THOMAS

Not if you're running up millage with random men.

Tears instantly form in her eyes looking at the man she calls her father who looks at her as nothing more than a common prostitute on the street.

Her mouth motions the words she wants to say, but they don't come out, quickly running upstairs to her room.

Turning the lights on, we see her room is still clean and organized.

With tears lacing her face, she walks over to the bed taking a seat, breathing heavy with anger.

She opens the drawer on her nightstand reaching inside grabbing the same diary she had when she younger, along with a pen.

Opening the diary, she looks at the pages written about her sexual encounters.

Her tears blot the pages adding Kevin to the list.

Flipping through a few pages, she comes to the section dedicated to her mother.

As she sits writing with tears staining the pages, her phone rings.

Pulling the phone from her pocket, she looks at the picture of Antoine with a fitted blue hat pulled down over his eyes.

She answer sniffing, wiping the tears from her eyes.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Where you at?

LATRICE

I'm home.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Why are you crying?

LATRICE

I don't care to talk about it.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Is he fucking with you?

She bursts into tears.

We can hear Antoine's heavy breathing on the other end.

ANTOINE (CONT'D) (V.O.)

Don't waste tears on his useless ass.

LATRICE

(Crying)

He treats me like these niggas.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Don't worry about it. You'll be okay once you leave for college.

LATRICE

I wanna know why he doesn't love me? I'm

his only child, and he shows me no love.

ANTOINE

It's because of what your mom was doing and he knows you're on the same path. He knows since he was always cheating and beating her ass, he drove her to that life. And now, he's doing the same thing with you. Crazy part about it all...he still loves your mom and you, despite all his bullshit.

LATRICE

But why treat me this way?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Reverse psychology. Treating you like shit should make you not wanna be like your mother. I don't think he understands instead of helping you, it made you worse.

LATRICE

That's so stupid.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

A lot of shit in life is stupid. You either let it trip you up holding you down or step over it.

She cracks a smile wiping her eyes.

LATRICE

I'm glad I have you.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

You know we go back to blowing bubbles and eating peanut butter and jelly sammiches.

She laughs.

ANTOINE (CONT'D) (V.O.)

What was that shit at the bus stop about?

LATRICE

Travis was with his boys fronting on me.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What happened?

LATRICE

I guess one of 'em was about to pull a gun on me. The bus pulled up, and before the door closed, he slapped me on the ass, taking about he'll see me again.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

That's why I be telling you, stop fucking around with these niggas.

LATRICE

Do I really have to hear this shit now?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

You already know what's up, so don't even act that way.

LATRICE

I need to ask you something.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What?

LATRICE

This lady on the bus gave me a card. I wanted to know---

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What kind of card?

LATRICE

If you let me finish, you'll know. She gave me the card, and I wanted to know what you think it means.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What does it say?

She goes in her pocket pulling out the card.

LATRICE

If I was to tell you you're a rose, and
I'll treat you as one. Would you accept
that's what you are?

She sits waiting on his response in an awkward silence.

We hear Antoine clear his throat.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

I know what it means. Why did she give it
to you?

LATRICE

She said she didn't want me turning out
like her.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

I see. Well, like I said, I know what it
means.

LATRICE

Are you going to tell me?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

It's something I been telling you for
years.

LATRICE

You tell me a lot of things.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

I know. I'm glad you made it home safe.

LATRICE

(Laughs)

Wow. What about the answer?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Maybe I'll tell you tomorrow. I love you.

He hangs up.

She sits holding the card and phone smiling, before placing them on the bed.

Picking up her diary, she flips all the way to the end.

INSERT DIARY

We see a picture of her and Antoine when they were kids sitting on her front porch.

Some words are written underneath the picture.

A smile comes across her face beginning to write.

INT. LUNCHROOM - AFTERNOON

The room is filled with students standing in line getting their lunches or sitting at tables eating talking loud.

Latrice is sitting at a table by herself with her lunch placed to the side, hard at work on some overdue homework.

Antoine comes into the room wearing a blue wife beater and Khaki's.

As he walks to the line for his lunch, everybody he passes sticks their hand out for a play, and he gives them one.

Travis comes over to Latrice table taking a seat across from her.

She continues writing, not paying attention he's sitting there.

He takes her pen from her.

She exhales sharp looking up at him.

LATRICE

Can I help you?

TRAVIS

That's fucked up how you did my boy.

LATRICE

What's your point?

Antoine is standing in line getting his lunch laughing with the person in front of him, when ARNOLD, a tall brown skin geek comes up tapping him on the shoulder.

Antoine turns looking at him.

ANTOINE

What's up?

ARNOLD

You see that nigga over there fucking with Trice?

ANTOINE'S POV

He sees Travis and Latrice having somewhat of a heated conversation.

Antoine shakes his head putting his lunch down.

ANTOINE

Here we go with this shit.

Latrice pulls another pen out focusing back on her work, paying Travis no attention.

TRAVIS

Trice, on some real shit. What's up with some head? We can slide off and get it poppin'.

She looks up from her book pissed off, throwing her pen in his face.

LATRICE

Get the fuck away from me!

People sitting within ear range turn looking at the two expecting a fight to breakout.

TRAVIS

Well, once a hoe, always a hoe!

He grabs her arm trying to snatch her across the table.
She struggles trying to break the grasp.
The students stand up instigating the fight getting loud.
Antoine makes haste through the chanting students reaching
Travis grabbing him by the shoulder turning him around.

TRAVIS

What the fuck is yo problem, nigga?!

ANTOINE

What the fuck is yo problem?!

TRAVIS

You stay protecting this bitch, and you
know how she cut! You need to get some
pussy...

Antoine hits him in the face making his head turn, and
Travis quickly recovers throwing a punch back.

Travis and Antoine are brawling in the middle of the
lunchroom, while the students cheer it on.

Latrice grabs two of her textbooks gripping them tight,
rushing over behind Travis clocking him upside the head.

Antoine catches him with a right knocking him to the floor.

Travis tries getting up, but Antoine kicks him hard across
the face.

The students cheer on the fight, as Antoine stomps Travis
in the face.

Tired of stomping him, Antoine moves some of the students
out the way grabbing a chair by the legs.

He comes back over to Travis ready to smash his head in,
and security grabs him taking the chair away.

Antoine tries breaking free as security drags him out the
room.

While the students continue cheering, other guards help
Travis to his feet.

Blood is coming from his mouth trying to stand straight, but he's dazed.

The students start simmering down.

Latrice cracks a slight smirk going back to her table.

CUT TO:

EXT. IN FRONT OF SOUTHEASTERN - AFTERNOON

Students are coming out the building, and chatter is heard.

Latrice comes out smiling about Antoine beating up Travis, making her way to the sidewalk.

Arnold comes running up beside her.

Continuing walking, she turns her head looking at him, and then looks back forward.

ARNOLD

Hey, Trice.

LATRICE

What's up?

ARNOLD

Are you okay?

LATRICE

Why wouldn't I be okay?

ARNOLD

I was making sure you're okay, after the whole thing in the lunchroom.

LATRICE

I'm already over it.

ARNOLD

I like how you hit him upside the head. He didn't see it coming.

She stops walking and he stops looking at her smiling.

LATRICE

What do you want, Arnold?

ARNOLD

If you come to the party...can I have a dance with you?

LATRICE

What party?

ARNOLD

Brandy is having a house party. Everybody in school knows about it.

Nodding her head side to side pondering on the idea of coming to the party, she slightly smiles.

LATRICE

I'll think about it.

ARNOLD

You'll think about dancing with me?

She releases a sarcastic laugh, patting him on the shoulder.

LATRICE

If that makes you feel comfortable, yes.

ARNOLD

Really?

She laughs walking off.

Arnold stands blushing, happy he might have a chance at with Latrice if she comes.

INT. LATRICE ROOM - NIGHT

Latrice is sitting on her bed reading a book with some takeout food on the bed beside her.

The aura in the room has her at peace, nodding her head to the music playing on low.

Her phone rings.

She picks it up from the nightstand seeing Antoine calling answering with a smile, placing the phone to her ear.

LATRICE

You okay?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Yeah, you know me.

LATRICE

You like how I hit him upside his shit?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Thanks.

LATRICE

You know I'll do anything for you, like you would for me. Even though I know you were probably like, why did she do that?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Nah, he can throw, I give him that. It's been a long time since I had a fight.

LATRICE

Is that right?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

I meant to give you something.

LATRICE

What's that?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

The meaning to what you asked me last night.

LATRICE

Why don't you just tell me?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

You'll get a better understanding if you read it.

LATRICE

Are you coming to the party?

ANTOINE (V.O.)

What party?

LATRICE

You know that cheerleader chick, Brandy? She's having a party tonight.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

I don't do house parties.

LATRICE

(Laughs)

Will you stop being a pussy, and come on.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

(Laughs)

Fuck you, and no.

LATRICE

Well, how else...

Thomas bursts in the room drinking Jim Beam from the bottle.

THOMAS

Who are you talking to?

Latrice looks at him sighing, shaking her head.

LATRICE

I'll call you back.

ANTOINE (V.O.)

Remember what I told you.

LATRICE

I know. I'll call you back.

Thomas takes a step forward, taking a sip from the bottle.

THOMAS

I asked you a question, whore.

Latrice places her phone in her pocket, staring at her father remembering the words Antoine told her, not allowing his words to get to her.

LATRICE

You like calling me that, don't you?

His face becomes etched with anger walking towards her, taking a sip from the bottle.

THOMAS

Are you getting smart with me?

LATRICE

I would more so call it asking a truthful question.

THOMAS

Open that smart-ass mouth again and see what it gets you.

She stands up smiling, placing her hands on her hips.

LATRICE

You're pathetic. I see why mama...

He slaps her on the bed.

THOMAS

Just like your goddamn mother, the bitch!

She sits stunned rubbing her cheek, before looking at him smiling.

LATRICE

You belittle people knowing you ain't

shit. Maybe mama was a hoe and I'm not far off, because I do the same thing. Now, I understand why you don't love me. So, you can call me whatever you want or hit me again.

He balls his fist tight ready to hit her, but he can't.

THOMAS

You want me to hit you, because you know that's all you're worth.

LATRICE

Oh, no. I know who I am, and what I'm worth now.

THOMAS

I told you---

LATRICE

I hope the guilt of making your daughter a hoe eats away at you, just like the death of mama.

She stands up giving him a kiss on the cheek, before making her way towards the door.

Feeling ashamed, he lowers his head, clearing his throat.

THOMAS

Latrice...let me say one thing.

She stops, but doesn't turn around.

LATRICE

What?

THOMAS

...I love you.

LATRICE

(Dry laugh)

You love putting me down. No more.

She walks out the room.

Thomas takes a seat on the bed taking a sip from the bottle lowering his head.

Reaching over opening the drawer on the nightstand, he reaches in taking the diary out.

Opening the book reading the first few pages, tears build in his eyes taking another sip, now realizing he made his daughter go down the same path his wife was on.

INT. BRANDY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is filled with people dancing and drinking, listening to the music playing.

From the layout of the room, you can tell Brandy's parents have money.

Latrice comes in the house through the crowded room.

The ones who notice her turn their nose up staring at her.

Arnold is off in the corner trying to talk to a female.

The female looks at him laughing, before walking off.

Latrice walks up behind him tapping him on the shoulder.

Arnold turns around with a big smile.

ARNOLD

I'm glad you could make it.

LATRICE

Why is that?

ARNOLD

I can get my dance.

She stares at him doing her best holding back from laughing.

LATRICE

..Right. Before we do that, where are the drinks?

ARNOLD

It's a whole variety in the back.

LATRICE

Let me throw a few back, and then we can dance.

ARNOLD

Bet.

Latrice walks off laughing, making her way through the people in the room.

Arnold stands blushing turning his attention to talk to another female, and she looks at him shaking her head no.

As Latrice gets closer to the kitchen...she sets a foot in, and then pauses with a look of fear.

LATRICE'S POV

Travis and Marcus are standing by the sink, drinking and smoking.

Latrice quickly turns around making her way back to the front.

Marcus takes a sip from his cup catching a quick glance, but he's not certain if it was her.

Travis, swollen face and busted lip is taking a sip from his cup looking at the other girls in the room.

Marcus taps him on the shoulder.

MARCUS

I think I just saw that freak bitch.

Travis takes another sip looking at him.

TRAVIS

Who?

MARCUS

That bitch from the bus stop.

Travis looks around the room.

TRAVIS

Where she go?

MARCUS

Let's go see.

TRAVIS

Yeah, I owe that bitch.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Latrice is scrambling through the people on the stairs making out, heading straight to the bathroom running in locking the door.

She takes a seat on the tub scared rocking back and forth, pulling out her phone quickly calling Antoine.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DREW'S CAR - {MOVING} - CONTINUOUS

Rap music is playing. Drew takes one last pull from the blunt before passing it to Antoine.

Antoine takes the blunt taking a hard pull, exhaling slow, nodding his head to the music.

DREW

You think it'll be some bad bitches here?

ANTOINE

Cheerleaders keep bad bitches around. But, that's not why I decided to go.

DREW

I know. That's real shit you look out for ya girl like that.

Antoine takes a pull, before passing it back to Drew.

ANTOINE

That's not my girl. I made a promise with my mother I'll never break.

Drew takes a pull laughing under his breath.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

DREW

Niggas never admit they love someone.

ANTOINE

Shut the fuck up.

Antoine's phone vibrates on his lap.

When he looks down, he sees Latrice picture.

Drew takes another pull.

DREW

(Laughs)

I'll be damn, speaking of yo boo.

ANTOINE

Fuck you.

Antoine turns the music down before picking up the phone answering, placing the phone to his ear.

ANTOINE

Are you at the party? I decided I'll come if you're there.

LATRICE (V.O.)

How far away are you?

ANTOINE

About five or ten minutes away. Why are you whispering?

LATRICE (V.O.)

Travis and that dude I told you about are here.

ANTOINE

Fuck. Where are you now?

LATRICE (V.O.)

I'm in the bathroom, scared as shit.

ANTOINE

Stay right there, I'm on the way.

Antoine hangs up slinging the phone down.

DREW

What's up?

ANTOINE

Hurry up and get us there.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BRANDY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

After searching the basement and in front of the house, Marcus and Travis come back in the house upset, still scanning for Latrice.

Travis taps Marcus on the shoulder pointing at Arnold still attempting to get down with a female.

The two make their way towards him.

Travis grabs Arnold by the shoulder turning him around.

Arnold stares at Travis ready to fight, and then he looks at Marcus using his eyes signaling him to look down seeing he's holding the handle of the gun under his shirt.

Arnold's eyes widen, taking a step back.

TRAVIS

Where did that bitch go?

Marcus pulls the nine-millimeter from his pants, holding it down in front him.

Arnold is in fear for his life.

ARNOLD

I think she went upstairs. Chill with that gun shit, Bro.

MARCUS

Shut the fuck up, nigga. Enjoy the party.

Marcus places the gun back under his shirt.

The two make their way to the bathroom.

Arnold stands grabbing at his chest breathing deep with fear outlining his eyes.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Latrice is still sitting on the tub rocking back and forth scared, holding her phone tight praying Antoine will arrive soon.

There's a knock on the door.

She looks over at the door.

LATRICE

I'm using it.

There's another knock at the door that makes her nervous, standing to her feet clinching the phone.

LATRICE (CONT'D)

I said...

Travis kicks the door in and because the music is loud, her screams go unheard.

Travis rushes in covering her mouth. Marcus follows in closing the door.

Travis throws her down on the floor, and then holds her down by the arms.

Marcus holds her legs down.

Latrice screams in fear trying to break free.

MARCUS

I told you I was coming back for this pussy.

TRAVIS

It's time for payback, bitch.

Travis releases one of her arms, slapping her hard across the face.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BRANDY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Antoine and Drew storm in the house shoving people out the way looking for Latrice.

The ones who were pushed have attitudes, but they can tell by the way Antoine is acting, it's best to leave him alone.

Coming back into the living room, Antoine sees Arnold off to the side pointing upstairs.

Antoine and Drew dash for the stairs.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Latrice is on the floor crying with blood coming from her nose and mouth, stripped of her pants.

Marcus is fingering her aggressive, making sure she suffers before they rape her.

Travis stands up over her head unbuckling his pants.

TRAVIS

Time to collect on the head you owe me, bitch.

Just as he gets ready to drop his pants, Antoine kicks the door in knocking Marcus over to the side.

Drew lunges grabbing Travis by the back of the head, slamming his head against the wall.

Latrice quickly grabs her pants moving out the way.

Marcus tries getting up, but Antoine quickly grabs him.

The two begin tussling, spilling out the room.

Drew continues holding Travis by the head, slamming his face in the mirror cracking it, staining the glass with his blood.

Antoine and Marcus are trying to overpower each other, and end up tumbling down the stairs.

The people upstairs look on shocked.

They crash at the bottom, and the music comes to a stop.

The two quickly get back to their feet fighting.

Latrice comes running down the stairs standing to the side with everyone else watching the fight.

Drew leaves out the bathroom leaving Travis unconscious on the bathroom floor with his faced covered in blood.

Marcus gets enough space from Antoine going for his gun.

Drew flies down the stairs tackling him, before he can get his hand on the handle.

BRANDY, the sexy brown skin petite cheerleader is off in the corner on the phone with the police.

Everybody cheers on Antoine and Drew stomping Marcus.

They stop stomping him, grabbing Marcus by the arms dragging him outside.

Everyone follows.

Outside, the quiet suburban neighborhood is disrupted by the cheers of people at the party watching Drew and Antoine drag Marcus into the street dropping him under a streetlight, beginning to stomp him again.

Latrice runs out the house over to Antoine grabbing his arm.

He turns looking at her with his face covered in sweat and hate in his eyes, until he sees it's her.

Grabbing her tight in a hug, he gives her a kiss on the cheek.

Drew stops stomping Marcus looking around the area hearing the sound of police sirens in the distance.

DREW

We need to go, cuz.

Antoine turns looking at him.

ANTOINE

You go. I have to make sure she's good.

Drew runs to his royal blue old-school Monte Carlo with blue tinted windows getting in starting it up, backing out, turning around driving the opposite way down the street.

The lights from the police cars can be seen drawing near.

Antoine walks Latrice over to the sidewalk.

The people on the porch continue watching, waiting to see what'll happen next.

Stopping on the sidewalk, Antoine cuffs Latrice face looking into her tear filled eyes.

ANTOINE

You okay?

LATRICE

Thank you.

ANTOINE

This is why I don't do house parties. It never turns out good.

Everybody is watching the police draw near, but nobody is watching Marcus slowly turning on his side, pulling his nine-millimeter out.

Antoine continues cuffing Latrice face staring in her eyes...and then he leans in giving her a passionate kiss.

He pulls back staring at her smiling.

Latrice is dazed from what just happened, slowly smiling staring in Antoine's eyes.

They hold hands in love as they should've been doing since they met.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

With every breath I take. You'll never---

MARCUS (O.S.)

Bitch ass nigga!

Antoine turns around seeing Marcus up on his feet with blood spilling from his face aiming his gun.

Thinking about Latrice safety first, Antoine stands in front of her just as Marcus opens fire, hitting him once in the chest and twice in the stomach, causing him to fall back into Latrice.

They both hit the ground.

The people on the porch rush back in the house.

The police pull up getting out guns drawn.

Marcus turns looking at them with insanity in his eyes aiming the gun.

That's the last thing he sees as the police open fire, dropping him to the ground dead.

Latrice is crying holding Antoine in her arms as he spits up blood.

But despite how much pain he's in, he still holds a smile looking into her eyes.

LATRICE

You'll be okay. Just lay here in my arms.

ANTOINE

You...you know me.

He spits up blood, and she wipes it away.

Police officers come over trying to tend to him, and she waves her hand for them to move.

Antoine goes in his pocket pulling out a piece of folded paper staining it with his blood extending it to her.

She takes the paper, placing it down on the ground.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

That's the answer.

LATRICE

I don't care about that. I need you to relax.

He smiles at her, before spitting to the side.

ANTOINE

You need to care, because you need to understand. Don't worry about me. I'll always...

He turns his head, and blood spills from his mouth.

She tries shaking him, but it does no good.

The scream she releases sends chills up the spines of everyone in the area.

She holds Antoine tight.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. IN FRONT OF BRANDY'S HOUSE - AN HOUR LATER

Coroners are placing the body bags filled with Antoine and Marcus bodies in the van closing the door.

Travis is sitting in the back of a squad car looking pitiful, with bits of glass still stuck in his bloody face.

The coroner van and squad car with Travis in the back pulls off.

Latrice is standing to the side on the sidewalk in a daze, unable to grasp her best friend is dead.

She looks at the bloodstained note Antoine gave her.

OFFICER comes over standing in front of her recognizing the pain she's going through, but he still has to do his job asking questions.

OFFICER

Are you okay?

Keeping her eyes locked on the note, she sniffles.

LATRICE

I'll be fine.

OFFICER

Are you sure? I know you saw your
boyfriend---

LATRICE

He wasn't my boyfriend.

She looks up at him with her tear filled red eyes.

LATRICE (CONT'D)

But he should've been. Please, just leave
me alone. I'll be fine.

With nothing more to say, Officer turns his attention to
the people on the porch standing in silence, horrified from
what they witnessed tonight.

OFFICER

Everybody, pack it up. The party is over.

Officer walks back to the squad car getting in sitting with
his partner for a few minutes before pulling off.

Latrice is still stunned looking at the blood on her
clothes, believing it's her fault Antoine is dead.

Shaking her head taking a deep breath, she turns her
attention to the people on the porch.

LATRICE

I know all of you think I'm a hoe, and I
can accept that. But all of you fuck and
suck whoever. The only difference is I put
my business out there, and I'm fine with
that. You niggas label me a nasty hoe, not
knowing if the bitch you kiss has another
man's dick on her lips.

She looks down at the blood on her clothes and laughs, and
then looks back at them.

LATRICE (CONT'D)

The man I lost tonight. ...My best friend,
who should've been my man. He made me
realize what I'm really worth as a person.

It appears she's wants to break down crying, but she
maintains taking a step towards the porch.

Everyone is nervous, because they don't know what to
expect.

LATRICE (CONT'D)

Continue calling me a hoe, because I
accept it proudly. I'm a hoe that's seen
the light. Sadly, none of you can say
that, because you judge before judging
yourself. But you know deep down inside,
you're worse of a hoe than me.

Latrice stares them down.

They all look at each other registering the truth she
spoke.

With a new found confidence in her life, she walks away
with pride, no longer feeling the shame she once had.

Coming to a stop under a streetlight a few blocks away from
the house, she goes in her pocket retrieving the bloody
note.

Taking a deep breath, she rubs her thumb across the blood
in sorrow, slowly opening the note.

INSERT THE NOTE

ANTOINE (V.O.)

A rose signifies the beauty and life of a
woman. Her life is layered in each petal
good or bad, trying her best to uphold the
beauty. The thorns prevent people from
harming her. The stem is her strength and
longevity, signifying she can go the whole
nine yards with the proper nourishment.
You define what a rose is, because you are
a rose. And no matter what, I'll always
keep you strong. You're my best friend,
and my heart. I love you for who you

really are. Always and forever, you'll be
my rose. I love you. That's what it means.

Words can't explain her emotions placing the note tight
against her heart, doing her best to hold back the tears.

An old-school red Cadillac pulls up on the side of the
street.

YOUNG PROSTITUTE age sixteen, brown skin wearing a skirt
and halter top comes out the passenger door.

Closing the door, she leans back in the car, and when she
stands straight, we see her placing a wad of money between
her breasts.

Latrice looks at her shaking her head, watching Young
prostitute placing gum in her mouth, before looking her
way.

Young prostitute comes up on Latrice.

She shows a look of concern staring at the tears coming
from Latrice eyes.

YOUNG PROSTITUTE

What's wrong?

Latrice sucks up her tears folding the note, placing it
back in her pocket.

LATRICE

Nothings wrong. Not anymore.

YOUNG PROSTITUTE

You wanna come make this money?

Latrice sighs deep, patting her on the shoulder.

LATRICE

Find someone to nourish you for growth.
You're a beautiful rose. Know your worth.

Latrice wipes the tears from her eyes smiling walking off.

Young prostitute spits her gum to the side letting the
words Latrice said sink in, watching her walk off.

SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK:

"The source of life should be cherished, because without women, there would be no life. Know your worth as a woman, discovering your true potential."

Bernard Mersier

END CREDITS