

THE RIGHTEOUS ONE

Pilot: Chapter 1 - In the Beginning

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. COBB COUNTY DETENTION CENTER - DAY

News vans are parked outside the Cobb County Detention Center, where local news reporter SHANICE NANCE (20s), African American, pretty stands in front of a camera crew.

SHANICE NANCE

This is Shanice Nance reporting live from the Cobb County Detention Center. We are just hours away from the trial of Rebecca Williams, the foster parent who made headlines earlier this year when she was charged with child molestation.

Shanice motions toward a crowd of PROTESTERS gathered near the building.

SHANICE NANCE (CONT'D)

As you can see by the many protesters on site, Rebecca's case has been a topic of debate across the state, and from everyone's legal perspective, this trial is going to set the precedence for caregivers for years to come.

INT. COBB COUNTY DETENTION CENTER - DAY

REBECCA WILLIAMS (41), African American, medium built is led down a long corridor in shackles and a jumpsuit by two DETENTION OFFICERS. Her head hangs low and her appearance is disheveled. They approach an open door to an interrogation room and enter.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca takes a seat in the brightly lit room. The Detention Officers close the door and unlock Rebecca's handcuffs.

Rebecca looks around the room, and her leg starts shaking up and down, nervously. The door opens again and Attorney ISAAC LEWIS (44), African American, edgy rugged cool look, walks in and the detention officers depart the room.

ISAAC

Hello, Becca. I just spoke to the nurse: they're going to move you to the infirmary until your trial.

(MORE)

ISAAC (CONT'D)
They said you stopped eating... is
that true?

Rebecca wipes her running nose with her sleeve.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Rebecca, you have to eat something,
you have to build up your strength
for the trial.

Rebecca SNIFFLES and keeps her vision to the side, ignoring
Isaac.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
I know you're depressed, but I
can't defend you if you won't
answer me. We're hours away from
your trial, so we need to go over
your testimony.

Rebecca stays silent.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Hey, don't worry, it's going to be
OK, but I need for you to do
something for me.

Isaac leans in closer to Rebecca.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Rebecca! I'm talking to you! Why
aren't you answering me?! Rebecca!

Rebecca slowly shifts her attention to Isaac. Her eyes are
red and teary as she glares at Isaac with an unflinching
gaze.

TITLE CARD: CHAPTER ONE: IN THE BEGINNING

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: Six months earlier

Rebecca drinks tea at a table by herself in the cozy little
shop, reading the news on her tablet.

BILLY WILLIAMS (45), African American, full facial hair,
muscular physic enters and spots Rebecca. He walks over to
her. Rebecca acknowledges him.

REBECCA
Thanks for meeting me, Billy.

BILLY

Yeah. So, what's this about?

He slumps down in the chair across from her, making clear he isn't thrilled to be there.

REBECCA

I thought we agreed that I was handling Randy's college choices, so I'm confused as to why you're interfering all of a sudden?

Billy lets out a sarcastic chuckle.

BILLY

Interfering? Are you serious?

REBECCA

I have full custody of the kids, Billy, and I told Randy he could decide where he wanted to go!

BILLY

The scouts from Duke and Alabama contacted me, OK? They asked Randy to come take a look at their schools, and I thought their coaches could work with Randy to better hone his skills. The boy has an arm--

REBECCA

He does, but our son needs to use his head, too. I want him to experience an HBCU as I did. Alabama A&M wants him and we're going to see their school when we get back from our Jamaica trip in two weeks.

Billy shoots Rebecca a disturbing look and shakes his head while rolling his eyes.

BILLY

Jamaica trip? Becca, I'm getting married next weekend! Why would you plan a trip the same time as my wedding?

Rebecca SLAMS down her cup of coffee on the table.

REBECCA

It's not my fault you couldn't wait for the ink to dry on our divorce paper before you decided to remarry! Dammit, Billy! That girl's only 10 years older than Randy!

BILLY

Don't start with this shit again!

REBECCA

I get it: you had your midlife crisis and so you went and got yourself a young one.

BILLY

Why can't you wish me well? Aren't you receiving the child support checks? Don't they come on time?

REBECCA

Fuck you, Billy!

BILLY

You're pathetic, Becca! This isn't about any schools, it's about your need to control everything!

Rebecca grits her teeth and narrows her gaze at Billy.

REBECCA

You know what's pathetic Billy? That you couldn't do something as simple as keeping your dick in your pants.

Billy stands up in aggravation and walks toward the door. He turns to face Rebecca.

BILLY

Goodbye Rebecca, tell the kids I'll call them later.

Billy walks out, leaving Rebecca fuming.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

In the men's dressing room, RANDY WILLIAMS (17), African American, athletic physic is on his CELL PHONE while he tries on some swimming trunks.

RANDY

I'll miss you too, but we'll only be gone for two weeks... I'm still gonna see you tonight. We'll meet at your sister's house like before?

Randy examines his reflection in the mirror with confidence. He nods his head with a smile plastered over his face.

RANDY (CONT'D)

I know bae... I love you too, bye.

Randy ends the call and continues to try on swimwear.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

Randy walks out of the fitting room and stands in front of Rebecca with some swim shorts on.

RANDY

Momma, how do these look?

REBECCA

(laughing)

Boy, you look like a skeleton in shorts!

RANDY

Very funny. Whatever!

REBECCA

Do you have something to wear for your senior trip?

RANDY

We're just going to the stupid Aquarium, I don't think I need to pick out any clothes for that.

REBECCA

Just make sure you dress appropriately. You know I don't like your underwear showing.

RANDY

That's the style, Momma, I know you don't like it, but I have an image to uphold.

Randy shoots Rebecca a cocky smile and stands tall and proud.

REBECCA

An image to uphold? Boy, please!
Needless to say, no son of mine is
going to be walking around looking
like that, especially when you're
going to Morehouse.

Randy's demeanor shifts from confidence to apprehensive as if
he's afraid to share something with his mother.

RANDY

I got letters from other schools
too, Momma. I don't know if I want
to go there.

REBECCA

I know, baby, but you know I want
you to go to an HBCU.

RANDY

And like always, I do whatever you
say, right?

REBECCA

Son, Momma knows best; Now change
your clothes and let's go.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Rebecca and Randy proceed through the parking lot, toward
Randy's Dodge Charger.

INT./EXT. DODGE CHARGER - MOMENTS LATER

The Dodge Charger comes to the intersection of PEACHTREE and
PINE. Rebecca screams out.

REBECCA

Watch out, Randy! Watch out!

Randy turns to see what Rebecca is yelling about -- and sees
a SEMI-TRUCK barreling toward them. It slams on its brakes
and skids to a stop -- barely missing them.

The INTERSECTION LIGHT is green for both the semi-truck and
Randy's Dodge Charger.

RANDY

Momma, are you OK?

REBECCA

I'm good, Son, but somebody's going to get killed out here. I'm calling the city when I get home!

Randy shakes his head and they drive off.

PEDESTRIANS who saw the incident are now looking both ways as they cross the street.

INT. REBECCA'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Rebecca is sitting on the couch reading the NEWSPAPER. Randy enters.

RANDY

I'm going to hang out with my friends.

REBECCA

Can you drive Ellah to Jackie's house before you go? They're going to the movies.

Randy slouches his body and lets out a sigh of frustration, which leads to a groan.

RANDY

Come on, Momma, I'm going to miss the start of Atlanta Housewives. Can't Jackie's mom pick her up?

REBECCA

Atlanta Housewives? You and your boys watch Atlanta Housewives?

RANDY

Yeah, the women on there are fine and Kandi's got a big ol' booty.

REBECCA

Oh, Lord! Well, drop her off on the way.

Rebecca yells upstairs.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Ellah, Randy's going to take you to Jackie's house! Come on!

ELLAH (O.S.)

Coming!

ELLAH WILLIAMS (16), African American, gymnast physic runs down the stairs and gives Rebecca a hug.

ELLAH (CONT'D)

Bye, Momma.

(to Randy)

Come on, mule face, let's go!

RANDY

I'm coming, Bucky.

ELLAH

Bucky?

RANDY

Have you seen those horse teeth of yours?

Rebecca and Randy laugh.

ELLAH

Very funny!

RANDY

I know.

Randy and Ellah disappear out the front door.

REBECCA

Be careful kids!

INT. DODGE CHARGER - EVENING

Randy and Ellah drive down the street.

ELLAH

Can we stop at the store, so I can get me some candy for the movies?

RANDY

Momma told me to get you to Jackie's house and that's it!

ELLAH

Please, Randy!

Randy sighs and takes a right at the corner and proceeds in the same direction he came from earlier, passing the same faulty intersection light.

When they reach the intersection, Randy looks up and the light seems to be working fine.

ELLAH (CONT'D)
Why are you slowing down? What's
wrong with you?

RANDY
I'm just being careful.

Randy pulls up to the dollar store and parks.

INT./EXT. DODGE CHARGER - CONTINUOUS

Ellah returns to the car and Randy drives out of the parking
lot. Randy's phone rings. He answers.

RANDY
(on phone)
What's up?

Randy turns the radio down in the car, bringing it to a
silence.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I have to take my sister to her
friend's house first. I'll be there
in about 15 minutes.

Ellah turns the car radio back on. The music THUMPS loudly
through the speakers. Ellah dances in her seat, her seatbelt
undone.

Randy's car rolls through the PEACHTREE and PINE intersection
-- and once again, all the lights on each side of the
intersection traffic light are green.

Just then, Randy's car is violently hit by a truck.

Randy's car flips and Ellah is thrown through the passenger
windshield as her body bounces off the road and skids like a
rag doll down the street. Her body comes to rest on her back.

The car continues to roll several times, Randy is violently
thrown back and forth in his car seat.

Randy hits the steering wheel flinging his body back as the
car finally stops on it's rooftop.

He looks over at Ellah's body outside the car and scrambles
to unbuckle his seat belt, as gasoline spills in from the gas
tank at the rear of the car.

The pedestrians jerk on the car door, but it's no use.

Randy pounds on the window and looks at the pedestrians with fear.

Fire and smoke engulf the cabin and massive flames roar out of the windows, sending the pedestrians running away from the burning car.

INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Rebecca looks over at the clock -- 2:00 AM is displayed. She picks up the phone and dials a number.

REBECCA

Hi Cassandra, sorry to wake you,
but is Ellah still there?

CASSANDRA (O.S.)

Rebecca, Ellah's not here. I
thought she wasn't coming since she
didn't show up.

REBECCA

What do you mean she didn't show
up? That's impossible, I told Randy
to bring her to your house.

CASSANDRA (O.S.)

Well, honey, she's not here.

REBECCA

Can you please check with Jackie?

INT. CASSANDRA COLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CASSANDRA COLE (44), African American, medium build gets out of bed and hurries out of her room.

INT. INT. JACKIE COLE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cassandra enters the room and shakes her daughter, JACKIE COLE (16), African American, gymnastic physic awake.

CASSANDRA

Jackie, Jackie! Wake up.

Jackie rolls over in the bed and looks up at Cassandra with a moping gaze.

JACKIE

Momma, what's --?

CASSANDRA
Is Ellah in there with you?

JACKIE
No.

Cassandra picks up the phone.

CASSANDRA
Rebecca, Jackie just said--

REBECCA (O.S.)
I heard her. I don't understand:
she wouldn't go anywhere without
telling me.

CASSANDRA
Did you try calling some of her
other friends? Did Randy come back?
Maybe they went somewhere else.

REBECCA (O.S.)
Without telling me? They know
better than that. Thanks,
Cassandra, I'll call you back
later. Let me find out--

INT. REBECCA'S RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The doorbell rings. Rebecca turns on the upper-level light
and heads out of her bedroom.

INT. REBECCA'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca walks down the stairs to answer the door. She looks
through the peephole and sees two officers, OFFICER BERRY
(30s) and OFFICER THOMAS (30s). Confused, she opens the
door..

REBECCA
Hi, can I help you?

OFFICER BERRY
Yes Ma'am, are you Rebecca
Williams?

REBECCA
Yes.

OFFICER THOMAS
Are you the mother of Randy and
Ellah Williams?

REBECCA

Yes...

OFFICER BERRY

Mrs. Williams, I'm officer Berry and this is Officer Thomas with the Atlanta Police Department, we're sorry to inform you that there's been an accident...

Rebecca recoils. She stands in shock as her eyes show a fearful expression.

REBECCA

Accident? What do you mean, is everything OK? Where are my kids?!

Officer Berry and Officer Thomas exchange a solemn glance.

OFFICER BERRY

Your children -- I'm so sorry to inform you that both of your children have died...

OFFICER THOMAS

We need for you to come with us.

Rebecca stumbles backwards against the door. She holds her breath for a beat before exhaling. She shakes her head "no" with her hand clutched against her chest.

REBECCA

No, no, no! Not my babies, no, not my babies. Dear God, not my babies!

Rebecca crumbles to the floor at the news. She bursts into a deafening sob and wraps her arms around her knees.

Officer Berry consoles her, but the pain and agony are too much as her cries echo throughout the home.

INT. BILLY WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - MORNING

Billy and his fiancée, GINA JOHNSON (27), African American, mixed race, pretty are asleep in their bed. The phone rings and wakes them up. Gina looks over at the caller ID.

GINA

Why is she calling so late?!

Billy answers the phone.

BILLY

Rebecca, why are you calling this late? If you called to argue with me, then--

REBECCA (O.S.)

(crying)

Billy, there's been an accident.

BILLY

What? Why are you crying?

REBECCA (O.S.)

There was an accident, Billy. The children...are...they didn't make it, Billy.

Billy sits up and cries out --

BILLY

No!

INT. WILLIAMS' RESIDENCE - MID MORNING

The doorbell rings and PASTOR RUSSELL WALTON (52), African American, athletic build stands in the doorway. Cassandra greets him.

CASSANDRA

Pastor Walton, please come in.

PASTOR WALTON

Thank you, Sister Cole.

Pastor Walton eyes the very populated room, walks over to Rebecca and sits down next to her. Rebecca has tears running down her face.

PASTOR WALTON (CONT'D)

I am so very sorry for your loss. The entire church is here for you. God bless you, Sister Rebecca, and remember God is with you and Billy during these troubled times. Randy was a very special young man and he will be missed and your daughter too.

REBECCA

Thank you, Pastor.

She dabs her wet cheeks with a tissue.

PASTOR WALTON

I'm going to assign a grief counselor to you and Billy. Would that be alright?

REBECCA

That's so kind of you. I've been struggling lately and haven't been myself.

PASTOR WALTON

Sister Rebecca, grief can manifest itself in many different ways. No parent should bury their children, so it's understandable that you wouldn't feel like yourself. Your life has been interrupted in the most terrible of ways. Come, my dear, let us pray together.

Pastor Walton takes Rebecca's hand and begins a prayer.

INT. REBECCA'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The doorbell rings. Rebecca begrudgingly answers, revealing Billy on the other side. Rebecca is overwhelmed and pulls Billy close to her and cries on his shoulder.

REBECCA

Thank you for coming over Billy, I just can't believe this is...

Billy eases Rebecca off his shoulder. He looks at her with a solemn, yet aggravated expression.

BILLY

Jesus, Rebecca! Who were you yelling at? We heard you all the way down at the curb?

REBECCA

Who was I yelling at? No one, I was napping. I woke up when you rang the bell.

Walking around the ROSE BUSHES and coming into view is Gina. Her pretty young face and curvy frame is seen. She tilts her HEAD to the side and forward again as her LONG HAIR SWAYS and BOUNCE as she slowly struts towards the FRONT DOOR.

Rebecca's demeanor changes as she MEAN MUGS Gina.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Who is this?

BILLY
Rebecca, this is my fiancée Gina--

GINA
Hi Rebecca, I'm so sorry we're meeting under such unfortunate circumstances.

REBECCA
(yelling)
You have some nerve coming to my house. I don't want your Goddamn condolences, you home-wrecking bitch!

Billy grabs Rebecca's arm.

BILLY
Rebecca! What's gotten into you?
Gina was only expressing her sympathy!

REBECCA
I'm sorry, but why would you bring her here after what just happened to my children?

GINA
You mean our children!

Rebecca looks hard at Billy with a snarl.

REBECCA
Excuse me?

GINA
Randy and Ellah were Billy's children too.

REBECCA
Billy knows what I meant. I've been up all night and my head has been hurting and--

Rebecca's thought drifts away. She looks down and backs up again, her demeanor drastically different. She is now TONI.

REBECCA/TONI
Wait a minute, bitch! Aren't you the hoe that broke up Rebecca's family!?

(MORE)

REBECCA/TONI (CONT'D)

How dare you come into this house
trying to correct somebody! You
better hurry and get the fuck out
of here before I cut yo' ass!

Toni storms off toward the kitchen. Billy follows with a perplexed gaze.

BILLY

Rebecca! What the hell is your
problem?!

Toni yells from the kitchen, where silverware is heard rattling around.

REBECCA/TONI

Nigga! Stop calling me that, you
know that's not my name!

Billy takes Gina by the wrist and rushes towards the front door.

BILLY

Come on, Gina. I'm not putting up
with her crap.

GINA

You're unstable, Rebecca, and you
need help!

Toni comes back into the room with a butcher knife.

REBECCA/TONI

Bitch, you're gonna need some
fuckin' medical attention in a
minute!

Toni turns toward Billy wielding the knife at Gina.

REBECCA/TONI (CONT'D)

Don't you ever bring that stuck-up
bitch back here again or the next
time she won't make it out of here!

Billy and Gina run out of the house. Toni slams the front door and marches up the stairs.

INT. REBECCA'S RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Toni enters and sits on the bed. Her head goes up and then comes down again. She's Rebecca now. Rebecca notices the knife and drops it on the floor, confused.

INT. BILLY'S MERCEDES - MINUTES LATER

Gina is reeling in the passenger seat while Billy drives away from Rebecca's house.

GINA
That bitch is crazy! I can see why
you left her ass.

BILLY
Rebecca has never acted like that
before. That wasn't my wife.

Gina gives Billy a perturbed glare.

GINA
You mean your ex-wife?

Billy rolls his eyes and shrugs off the comment.

BILLY
You know what I mean, dammit!

GINA
What about our wedding?

BILLY
Our wedding?

GINA
Yes, our wedding, Billy!

BILLY
Are you kidding me? My children are
dead! How insensitive is that?

GINA
We have too much invested in this
wedding.

BILLY
We don't have anything invested. I
have everything invested. This
wedding is costing me over \$30,000
with that damn gown, shoes,
jewelry, makeup, the Goddamn
personnel trainer -- and that
fucking dog whisperer. So don't
talk to me about money, Gina. I'm
burying my children tomorrow and
that's the most important thing to
me -- not you or a GODDAMN WEDDING!

Gina huffs, crosses her arms and look out the window.

EXT. LINWOOD APARTMENTS - LATE AFTERNOON

LT. KATHERINE JONES (31), African American gets out of her patrol vehicle parked in front of the Linwood Apartment complex. She walks into the building.

INT. APARTMENT 17B - LINWOOD APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS

Lt. Jones enters an apartment and finds SERGEANT BERRA (29), Caucasian, muscular build is talking with another OFFICER. She walks toward them.

LT. JONES

What's going on here, Sergeant?

SERGEANT BERRA

Home invasion. A 6-year-old Hispanic female was sexually assaulted here after school.

LT. JONES

Where is the child now?

SERGEANT BERRA

She's been taken to Grady Hospital for examination.

LT. JONES

Victim's parents?

He points in the next room.

SERGEANT BERRA

Her father is in the Army, but her Grandmother's in there, Lieutenant.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sergeant Berra and Lt. Jones enter the bedroom, where they see LENA PEREZ (45), Puerto Rican, medium build.

SERGEANT BERRA

Lieutenant, this is Lena Perez, the Grandmother of the little girl.

LT. JONES

Ms. Perez, I know this is a difficult time for you, but I have a couple of questions.

MS. PEREZ

Si, but have you heard anything
about my Granddaughter Maria?

LT. JONES

No ma'am, nothing yet. Sergeant,
what time did the little girl get
home?

Sergeant Berra opens up a small notepad.

SERGEANT BERRA

She got home about 3:40 pm. The
neighbor saw the child running out
of the house naked at 4:15 pm.

LT. JONES

Why was she home alone, without
supervision?

SERGEANT BERRA

She said she couldn't afford a
sitter. Her older brothers and
sister usually get home right
around the time she does, but they
stopped at a friend's house.

LT. JONES

Ms. Perez, are you a US Citizen?

MS. PEREZ

Si, I was married to my son's
father. My oldest son, Manuel, is
in the Army. He's stationed in
Germany.

LT. JONES

So, your husband is a US Citizen?

MS. PEREZ

Si, but he died last year.

Lt. Jones picks up a picture of 6-year-old MARIA --

INSERT QUICK FLASH -- A SMALL BOY is struck by a bullet and
thrown to the ground, bleeding.

Lt. Jones is frozen by the memory. She clutches the photo
tighter, her eyes welling with tears.

SERGEANT BERRA

What do you want me to do about Ms.
Perez, Lieutenant?

Lt. Jones doesn't respond, she just stares ahead in a daze.

SERGEANT BERRA (CONT'D)
Lieutenant Jones?

He waves his hand in front of her face. Lt. Jones snaps out of it, shakes the memory off.

LT. JONES
Huh? Oh, sorry. Did you say something?

SERGEANT BERRA
What do you want me to do about Ms. Perez, Lieutenant?

Lt. Jones composes herself, becomes all business.

LT. JONES
We'll have to place Ms. Perez under arrest, Sergeant. One count of child neglect, and one count of endangerment. A 6-year-old should have never been home alone.

SERGEANT BERRA
Yes, but her Granddaughter was just assaulted, these kids need their Grandmother, especially now.

LT. JONES
Sergeant, you heard me. Contact Child Protective Services and get them down here.

MS. PEREZ
Please, please don't take my Grandchildren! They have no one to care for them!

LT. JONES
I'm sorry, Ms. Perez, but that's the law.

Sergeant Berra signals to the other Officer to take Ms. Perez into custody. The other Officer places her in handcuffs.

LT. JONES (CONT'D)
Sergeant, get Officer Jenkins to check on the little girl at Grady Hospital. Have CSI send me their analysis of the crime scene. We have a child molester out there and I want this asshole caught ASAP!

EXT. LINWOOD APARTMENTS - LATER

Ms. Perez is placed into the back of a police car as the remaining PEREZ CHILDREN are placed into a waiting CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES VAN.

EXT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

FUNERAL GUESTS make their way toward the church entrance, dressed from head-to-toe in upscale black attire.

INT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - SAME

Two mahogany coffins are adorned with bouquets of flowers and smiling pictures of Randy and Ellah.

FAMILY, STUDENTS and FRIENDS take turns paying their respects, before returning to their seats for the service.

Rebecca SOBS in the front row. Across the aisle from her, Gina consoles Billy.

Pastor Walton steps forward to address the congregation.

PASTOR WALTON

To the mother, father, family and friends of Randy and Ellah Williams, there is a loss in your life that cannot be explained; for there is no greater loss than when a child as young as these two beautiful souls. Let us pray.

Everyone bows their heads.

PASTOR WALTON (CONT'D)

God of all mystery, whose ways are beyond understanding, lead us, who grieve at these untimely deaths, to a new and deeper faith in your love. Remind us of that love which brought your only son, Jesus Christ, through death and into the resurrection of life. Heavenly Father, you have not made us for darkness and death, but for life with you forever. Without you we have nothing to hope for; with you, we have nothing to fear. Speak to us now, your words of eternal life.

(MORE)

PASTOR WALTON (CONT'D)

Lift us from anxiety and guilt to the light and peace of your presence, and set the glory of your love before us; Our father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom comes, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. We pray in Jesus' name; Amen.

In harmony, the congregation says "Amen."

CRIES fill the church as everyone weeps for their departed friends.

Rebecca sways back and forth with her eyes closed. Billy breaks down and leans on Gina.

INT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - LATER

Jackie Cole steps up to the podium.

JACKIE

Ellah was my best friend. We've known each other since the 1st grade. She was so beautiful and the best friend I could have ever asked for. Last summer when my parents were having issues, she stood by me and kept me laughing. When they divorced, Ellah was the glue that helped me keep it all together.

Jackie looks back at Ellah's casket.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Ellah, my beautiful sister, I love you and I'll miss you forever.

Jackie steps down from the podium and walks over to Rebecca and Billy. They stand up and hug. Jackie returns to her seat. KEVIN JENKINS (17), African American, athletic build stands up and walks to the podium.

KEVIN

Hello everyone, my name is Kevin Jenkins and I'm a senior at Northbrook High School. I'm a wide receiver on our football team. When I first met Randy my junior year, we were inseparable. He knew my secrets and I knew his. When I learned about the deaths of Randy and his sister I-- went into shock like most of you, but--

Kevin takes a deep breath and looks at Randy's casket, sobbing.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I just wanted you to know that Randy and I loved each other very much and even though we knew we wouldn't be allowed to be ourselves if this-- I mean if our secret ever came out-- it didn't change the fact that I loved him and he loved me.

(cries loudly)

Randy and I were going to be together!

GASPS and MURMURS are heard in response. Billy gets up and rushes the podium, pulling Kevin away from it.

BILLY

What the hell is this? Shame on you! Don't you have any respect?

KEVIN

Mr. Williams, I'm sorry, but I had to find some peace. This is the last time I'll ever get to tell Randy 'I love you' out loud. I loved him deeply, sir, and Randy didn't know how to tell you about us.

Kevin turns to Rebecca.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ms. Williams, he was going to tell you on your trip, but--

REBECCA

Have you no shame, young man!? We are burying our children and you disrespect my son this way, you have no right! My son was not gay!

BILLY

Get out of here!

KEVIN

You can kick me out and you can deny everything, but you can't deny the fact that your son and I were in love-- We were in love!

BILLY

Get the hell out of here, boy!

REBECCA

Get out of here! Someone get him out of here!

Kevin is led out of the church by some of the MEMBERS of the football team. The remaining mourners sit stunned as the church MUSICAL DIRECTOR begins to play.

EXT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

The two caskets are rolled out of the church and into two waiting hearses. The funeral guests follow behind and make their way toward their respective vehicles.

Billy and Rebecca get into a limousine.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Billy and Rebecca sit back as the DRIVER starts the limo and drives away from the church.

BILLY

I can't believe this!

REBECCA

That our son was gay?

BILLY

No, I can't believe that boy would ruin our service.

Rebecca sighs in frustration and thrusts her body against the seat of the car.

REBECCA

This is the last time we'll ever see our children, Billy. This was their day, not ours, and definitely not his. Everything doesn't revolve around us anymore.

BILLY

That's not what I meant, Becca. You always find a way to project this back on me.

REBECCA

Our children are gone. If Randy loved him, then so be it. I'm glad Randy found love. Who cares if it's with another man? Our babies aren't coming back.

Overcome with emotion, Rebecca turns to look out the window. Billy does the same.

EXT. STREETS - CONTINUOUS

The limousine is followed by a long procession of cars. Followed by the flashing lights of a POLICE ESCORT.

INT. DAVIS RESIDENCE - CARLOS' BEDROOM - MORNING

The ALARM CLOCK goes off.

CARLOS DAVIS (12), mixed race, slim, nerdy looking stumbles out of bed. The bed is full of BOOKS, scattered on top of the covers, and there's a basket of unwashed clothes by the door.

Carlos goes over to the basket, pulls out some wrinkled clothes and gives them a sniff. He grimaces at the smell then shrugs and puts them on anyway.

INT. DAVIS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Carlos opens the refrigerator and finds its empty, except for beer, wine and a box of baking soda.

Carlos closes the refrigerator. The WALL CLOCK displays 07:35. He opens the front door and leaves.

EXT. STREETS - MORNING

Carlos walks down the street and sees his father's car parked outside a bar.

INT./EXT. BAR - SAME

He looks in the window and sees his father, MICHAEL DAVIS (35), African American, medium build at the bar drinking and talking to the BARTENDER (40s), Caucasian.

In the mirror of the bar, Michael Davis sees his son and races out of the bar.

EXT. STREETS - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL

Are you walking to school? Did you miss the bus again? Goddammit, can't you do anything right?

CARLOS

I was at the bus stop on time, Dad--

MICHAEL

Then why the fuck are you walking?

CARLOS

There was a girl messing with me--

MICHAEL

For someone who's got a high IQ, you sure are one dumb motherfucker! You let some dumb bitch stop you from getting on the bus. You ain't nothing but a punk ass faggot!

CARLOS

She was talking about you, Dad; she said some mean things about you.

MICHAEL

What things? What did she say!?

CARLOS

That her mother saw you smoking crack.

Michael slaps Carlos across the face.

MICHAEL

She's a motherfuckin liar. It
wasn't crack! Now get your black
ass to school!

Carlos runs off.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Wait until you get home tonight,
you little bitch! Just wait!

Michael goes back into the bar.

EXT. HERBERT HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Carlos runs toward the entrance in a hurry.

INT. HERBERT HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Carlos arrives at school just as the SCHOOL BELL RINGS and
the classroom doors aligning the halls close.

Carlos starts toward his class and is stopped by the
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ANNIE WALTERS (48), mixed race, slim.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

I see you're late again, Mr. Davis.

CARLOS

Yes, Ma'am, but--

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL WALTERS

The bus driver said that you
intentionally missed the bus, is
everything all right?

CARLOS

I was-- Everything is fine. I, um,
left my chemistry book and had to
go get it.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL WALTERS

Why is your face swollen? Is there
something you need to tell me?

CARLOS

No, Ma'am, I just ran into the
closet door this morning.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL WALTERS

Mr. Davis, I expect more out of my
gifted students.

(MORE)

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL WALTERS (CONT'D)

Any more tardiness and I'll have to send you to detention and call your father, do I make myself clear?

CARLOS

Yes, Ma'am.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL WALTERS

And please do something about your personal hygiene, Mr. Davis.

Carlos holds his head down in shame.

CARLOS

Yes, Ma'am.

The Assistant Principal Walters shakes her head and walks away.

INT. FIRST PERIOD MATH CLASS - DAY

Carlos enters his MATH CLASS. MR. AIKEN (28), Caucasian, skinny and frazzled, stops teaching and looks at him.

MR. AIKEN

Come on in, Mr. Davis, and take your seat.

Mr. Aiken turns and addresses the class again.

MR. AIKEN (CONT'D)

Now, where was I? Oh yes, pull out your homework and turn your Algebra book to page 26. Your homework assignment was simple. Work on your zero and negative exponents...

Carlos takes his seat, which is right next to CHERRI JONES (16), African American, heavy set.

CHERRI

Hey, stank ass! I could smell you all the way from the hallway! Are you going to walk home after school or is your crack ass Daddy gonna come get you?

PATRICIA "PAT" THOMAS (16), mixed race, slim sitting next to Cherri overhears.

PAT

Why don't you leave him alone, he's not bothering you.

CHERRI
Stay out of this, carpet muncher.

PAT
Humph, that's cute coming from you
boo. Do you know that bullying is a
crime and you could go to jail?

CHERRI
Do you know not minding your damn
business gets you fucked up?

The STUDENTS around Pat laugh loudly.

PAT
Yeah, I heard that too, but I don't
think you're going to do that.

Mr. Aiken hears the laughter and looks to the back of the
class.

MR. AIKEN
Calm down back there! Don't let me
ask you again!

CHERRI
And why not, Ellen?

PAT
If you do that, then I'm going to
clown you in front of everybody.
Look down.

Pat leans over and whispers to Cherri.

PAT (CONT'D)
Between your legs, bitch!

Cherri looks between her legs and sees a red spot forming.

CARLOS
She's bleeding, do I need to call
the teacher?

CHERRI
Shut the fuck up, Einstein!

Pat yells out to Mr. Aiken.

PAT
Cherri! Are you okay? Mr. Aiken,
Mr. Aiken, I think Cherri popped
her cherry!

The classroom roars with laughter. Cherri runs out of the room, glaring at Patricia the whole way. Mr. Aiken is visibly upset.

MR. AIKEN

Settle down class, I said settle down! Mr. Davis, come up to the board please.

The classroom continues to erupt in boisterous giggles and horseplay as Mr. Aiken attempts to get the class under control.

MR. AIKEN (CONT'D)

Since you want to disrupt my class, why don't you teach it!

CARLOS

Did you say teach your class, Sir?

MR. AIKEN

That's right, young man. I was discussing exponents to the class. Are you familiar with them.

CARLOS

Yes, but...

MR. AIKEN

Why don't you explain what they are to the class and give them an example. I'm sure they'd love you here this over your backroom chatter.

CARLOS

Ok, if you say so, Sir.

Carlos looks around the room and exhales.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Exponents are a quantity representing the power to which a given number or expression is to be raised, usually expressed as a raised symbol beside the number or expression for example 3 in 2 cubed = $(2 \times 2 \times 2)$.

The class looks at Carlos in amazement. Mr. Aiken is taken aback.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

The exponent of a number says how many times to use the number in a multiplication.

Carlos writes on the CHALKBOARD.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

In 8 squared the "2" says to use 8 twice in a multiplication, so 8 squared = $8 \times 8 = 64$. In other words: 8 squared could be called "8 to the power 2" or "8 to the second power", or simply "8 squared" Exponents are also called Powers or Indices.

Mr. Aiken tries to quiet, Carlos, but he keeps talking.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

A negative exponent means how many times to divide by the number. For example: 8 to the power of $-1 = 1 \div 8 = 1/8 = 0.125$. Or many divides: For example: 5 to the power of $-3 = 1 \div 5 \div 5 \div 5 = 0.008$.

MR. AIKEN

That's, that's enough Mr. Davis, now please take your seat and keep quiet.

Carlos walks back to his seat and sits down. Pat looks at him and smiles.

PAT

Holy Shit, dude, you're a freaking human computer. How did you learn to do that?!

CARLOS

Do what?

PAT

Math, all that exponent shit! I still have a hard time on my multiplication tables.

CARLOS

I don't know, it comes to me very easy. I see the numbers and understand how to explain and solve them.

PAT

I never seen anything like that before.

CARLOS

I never seen anyone talk to Cherri like that before. That was cool too.

PAT

Why do you take her shit?

CARLOS

Look at her, she's huge.

Pat laughs.

PAT

If you stand up to her she'll leave you alone.

CARLOS

Are you crazy? She has four brothers on the football team. They all look just like her!

PAT

Then you need to man up before you get hurt.

CARLOS

I can beat her in chess! But fighting her? I wouldn't know how.

Pat shakes her head.

PAT

I'll teach you. Meet me after school and we'll work on some moves.

CARLOS

What moves?

EXT. HERBERT HOOVER HIGH - FOOTBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

Pat and Carlos are walking on the football field. Pat demonstrates several KARATE TECHNIQUES and shows Carlos some muscle strengthening drills.

Pat points to her throat.

PAT

If you hit someone here really hard, it'll stop them in their tracks and give you enough time to get away.

CARLOS

That looks dangerous. Can it kill them?

PAT

It depends on what you want to do and if you hit 'em hard enough.

CARLOS

For real?

PAT

Yes. Now, I need you to do some push ups, okay?

CARLOS

Okay.

Carlos gets down and attempts some slow, sad version of push ups, his body shaking through them.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

How did you learn all of this?

PAT

I had to protect myself from my Uncle.

CARLOS

Why?

PAT

He would come into my room late at night and touch me.

CARLOS

Touch you?

PAT

That's why we had to transfer to this school. We were put into foster care by the courts.

An awkward beat.

CARLOS

So, where's your sister?

PAT

We got separated; the state said we were too old to be kept together. Sometimes we see each other on the weekends. So, what does your mother do?

CARLOS

Momma died when I was 4, she was killed by a drunk driver.

PAT

And what about your dad?

Carlos hesitates for a beat. His eyes glare away from Pat almost as if he doesn't want to answer the question.

CARLOS

Well, he's-- expecting me home soon. I should probably get going.

PAT

Remember what I showed you, Carlos. And work on your push-ups, they're really bad.

CARLOS

Okay, Pat. Thanks again. I'll see you on Monday.

Pat writes her phone number on Carlos's notebook.

PAT

Hey, if you need anything call me!

CARLOS

I will!

Carlos waves goodbye and takes off.

EXT. BANKHEAD TOWERS APARTMENTS - NIGHT

A CHEVY IMPALA swerves around the corner and drives through the front entrance of Bankhead Towers Apartments and parks.

Michael Davis gets out and staggers drunkenly to the door. He struggles to get the door open but finally does.

INT. DAVIS RESIDENCE - CARLOS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carlos is in his room doing his homework.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Carlos, where you at!?

CARLOS
In my room, Dad. I'm doing
homework.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Goddammit! Get your black ass down
here, you thought I forgot about
you!?

INT. DAVIS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Carlos slowly comes down the stairs peeping around to see
where his father is and enters the kitchen.

Michael staggers toward Carlos, taking off his leather belt.

MICHAEL
You little shit, you thought I was
going to forget about you!? You
done embarrassed yourself and me.
When I'm through with you
motherfucker, you're going to
remember this beating!

Michael tightens the belt around his hand and strikes Carlos
with the buckle on his back. Carlos is thrown back into the
kitchen table. Michael strikes him again and again -- with
every hit of the buckle, Michael shouts out.

Carlos cries, winces in pain and tries to get away. Michael
throws him back down and continues to beat him unmercifully.

Somehow Carlos manages to defend himself and by sheer
accident, punches his Father in his throat. Michael stops,
grabs his throat and stumbles backwards, hitting his head on
the pointy edge of the electric stove.

CARLOS
(surprised)
Dad... Daddy!?

Blood pours out of Michael's head and he slumps down to the
floor. His body begins to twitch, the belt still wrapped
around his hand.

Michael's eyes are open as he lets out a long breath. Carlos
now in shock, shaken and bruised starts to cry and runs out
of the apartment.

INT. DAVIS RESIDENCE - MORNING

Lt. Jones arrives at the Davis residence. Her team is already onsite processing the crime scene.

Michael Davis's DEAD body is slumped on the floor next to the stove. A FORENSIC PHOTOGRAPHER takes pictures of the body and the surrounding area.

SERGEANT BERRA

(to Lt. Jones)

Good morning, Lieutenant. The front door was found open by one of the neighbors. He came in and found him dead. The victim's name is Michael Davis; he has one teenage son named Carlos. He said he heard some shouting around 10 pm last night, but he was used to it and thought nothing of it. He said the victim beats his son regularly.

Lt. Jones notes the information and turns back to the Photographer.

LT. JONES

Make sure you get a picture of the belt wrapped around his hand and the position of his head.

(back to Sergeant Berra)

Where's his son?

SERGEANT BERRA

I'm waiting on an update.

LT. JONES

Sergeant, look at his hand. He has a belt wrapped around it.

SERGEANT BERRA

Yes, I saw that.

CORONER TALLEY approaches them.

CORONER TALLEY

Lieutenant, it seems his larynx was crushed. He must have fell and cracked his skull on the edge of the stove.

Lt. Jones purses her lips in thought with a wrinkled brow.

LT. JONES

Hmm, do you think it's murder?

CORONER TALLEY

Murder, it's possible, but could be self defense too. I don't want to rule any of those out.

LT. JONES

Put out an APB on Carlos Davis, see if you can contact any relatives and walk the neighborhood. He may be scared and hiding.

EXT. HERBERT HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Carlos opens up the lid on a large garbage bin and climbs out. He spots an open lunchroom window and climbs through the window into the school cafeteria. He lays underneath a table and goes to sleep.

INT. REBECCA RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - DAY

The doorbell rings. Rebecca wakes up in the bed of her daughter, Ellah. Rebecca looks down at the back of her hand. It is stamped with "club Push-It".

She pulls back the bed sheets -- she's wearing cutoff jeans and a low-cut halter top exposing her cleavage.

The doorbell rings again. Rebecca grabs Ellah's robe.

REBECCA

Coming! I'm coming!

INT. REBECCA'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca unlocks the front door. It's Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

It's a Saturday girl! What are you still doing in bed and what's with those clothes?

REBECCA

I don't know. I don't know what happened. I was watching TV and then I got a terrible headache. The next thing I know I woke up in Ellah's bed with my mouth tasting like cigarettes.

CASSANDRA

Well, that's a little strange...

REBECCA

I know. Do you want some coffee?

Cassandra nods and enters the house, following Rebecca toward the kitchen.

INT. REBECCA RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

CASSANDRA

Maybe you need to get out and get some fresh air. I'm going to the mall, you want to come along?

REBECCA

Speaking of the mall, I got a letter from the city saying they fixed that traffic light.

CASSANDRA

(angry)

You should sue those bastards!

REBECCA

Oh, I have, and they've already offered a settlement. I told them to go to hell. I already spoke to Isaac and he said he would represent me.

INT. REBECCA RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - LATER

Cassandra and Rebecca are seated, enjoying fresh cups of coffee.

CASSANDRA

You know, Becca, I heard the city is looking for foster parents...

REBECCA

Cassandra, I don't know--

CASSANDRA

Here me out, Girl. I know it's probably too soon, but I remembered that you and Billy were thinking about fostering a while back, and well, I think you'd be good at it.

REBECCA

I'm still grieving, Cassandra, and I don't know if I have the strength to care for someone else's children. Not to mention, I haven't been feeling like myself lately.

She gestures to her clothes.

CASSANDRA

Well, give it some thought. I have a friend at Child Protective Services that can process your paperwork if you change your mind.

REBECCA

Thank you, honey, I'll think about it.

Cassandra smiles.

Rebecca is apprehensive about what Cassandra has mentioned. They both continue to sip from their coffee mugs as Cassandra rests a hand on Rebecca's arm in compassion.

INT. HERBERT HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Carlos wakes up under the table and walks into the school kitchen, where he sees two huge locked refrigerators and some unopened cans of fruit cocktail sitting out.

He looks around to make sure he's alone, then opens the can. He grabs some little boxes of juice and packs of raisins and begins to eat. Carlos sees a Radio on the counter and turns it on. The morning news is reporting.

RADIO WEATHER MAN (V.O.)

...It's going to be a great day for the park. Partly cloudy with temperatures in the high 60s. That's all for the weather. Ken, back to you.

KEN JACOBS (V.O.)

A body of a man was found in the Bankhead Towns Apartment complex last night. On the scene is David Barbour with the details.

DAVID BARBOUR (V.O.)

Thanks, Ken. The body of 35 year-old Michael Davis was found in his home at Bankhead Towers Apartments.

(MORE)

DAVID BARBOUR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The police suspect foul play, and the victim's son, 12-year-old Carlos Davis, is missing. The police have issued an Amber Alert, and ask that if anyone knows the whereabouts of Carlos Davis, please contact the Atlanta Police Department.

KEN JACOBS (V.O.)

Thank you, David, we'll be back after this commercial break.

Carlos turns off the Radio. A concerned look spreads over his face.

EXT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

Pastor Walton drives his customized BENTLEY PHANTOM up to the Sweetwater Baptist Church steps and parks. He gets out and enters the church.

INT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Pastor Walton is greeted by CHURCH SECRETARY, RAY JOHNSON (19), African American, gay, slim and DEACON DEREK LANCASTER (35), African American, Full facial hair, muscular physic. They go into Pastor Walton's office.

PASTOR WALTON

How about some donuts and coffee, Deacon?

DEREK

Yes, Pastor?

PASTOR WALTON

Can you please go down to the donut shop and bring us back some coffee and donuts? I need to speak to Ray.

DEREK

Sure, Pastor, do you want cream and sugar in your coffee?

PASTOR WALTON

Yes, and bring back a few of those chocolate covered donuts too with sprinkles.

DEREK

Sure, Pastor.

Derek leaves the office and closes the door. Pastor Walton and Ray are left alone.

PASTOR WALTON
Ray, did you get my sermon typed
for Sunday's service?

RAY
Yes, but I think it's missing a
page, Pastor.

PASTOR WALTON
I gave you all of the pages
yesterday, how incompetent are you?
Jesus!

RAY
I typed what you gave me, and it
looks like the last page is
missing.

PASTOR WALTON
Come here, Ray!

Ray gets up and goes over to Pastor Walton's desk.

PASTOR WALTON (CONT'D)
You know I don't like incompetence.
Turn around, bend over and pull
down your pants.

Ray hesitates for a couple beats. He doesn't want to do this,
but knows the consequences of not listening to the Pastor.

Ray turns around and unbuckles his pants and exposes his butt
to Pastor Walton. Pastor slaps Ray with an open hand on his
bare butt.

PASTOR WALTON (CONT'D)
Why do you always have to talk
back?

Ray grimaces.

RAY
Sorry Pastor! It won't happen
again!

PASTOR WALTON
When I ask you to do something, do
it!

RAY
Yes, Pastor!

PASTOR WALTON
Now, hold still.

Pastor Walton pushes the door closed. He then walks over and pulls down his pants and stands behind Ray.

INT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The sounds of a screeching desk are heard outside in the hall.

INT. SWEETWATER BAPTIST CHURCH - OFFICE - LATER

Derek enters the office area of the church with coffee and donuts in hand. Ray comes out of Pastor Walton's office smiling and holding a single piece of paper.

PASTOR WALTON
Now, Ray, I want two copies of
Sunday's program on my desk before
you leave today, is that clear?

RAY
Yes, Pastor.

PASTOR WALTON
And Ray, before retyping my sermon,
can you please get my wife on the
phone?

RAY
Yes, Pastor.

Ray picks up the receiver and dials. On the other end, MARGO WALTON (40), African American, slim, pretty answers the phone.

RAY (CONT'D)
Hello Mrs. Walton, this is Ray,
Pastor Walton would like to speak
with you.

MARGO (O.S.)
Thank you, Ray.

Ray pushes a button and transfers the call to Pastor Walton. Pastor Walton picks up the phone.

PASTOR WALTON
Margo?

MARGO (O.S.)
Yes, Russell?

PASTOR WALTON
Can you please get my suits out of
the cleaners and get my shoes
shined? I need to look my best
tomorrow.

MARGO (O.S.)
Is there anything else you need?

PASTOR WALTON
Yes, I'm flying to New York Monday
with two of my youth ministry
students. I forgot to tell you with
everything going on with the
Williams' family.

MARGO (O.S.)
Russell, why are you taking two of
your students? You're not--

PASTOR WALTON
No, Margo, they want to become
youth ministers and I want to give
them the push that they need.

MARGO (O.S.)
How old are they?

PASTOR WALTON
You're never too young to serve
God, Margo.

MARGO (O.S.)
Please, don't start this again
Russell, I--

Pastor Walton hangs up the phone and calls Derek into his
office. The door to Pastor's office stays open.

INT. 16TH PRECINCT - AFTERNOON

Carlos enters the 16TH PRECINCT and sits down on a wooden
bench. DESK SERGEANT DANIEL RIVERA (42), Puerto Rican,
athletic build looks over and sees him.

SERGEANT RIVERA
Hello, young man, can I help you?

CARLOS
My name is Carlos Davis. I'm here
to turn myself in.

SERGEANT RIVERA
Excuse me?

CARLOS
I killed my father.

SERGEANT RIVERA
You what? Come with me, son.

Sergeant Rivera escorts Carlos down the hallway and speaks
with DETECTIVE BENJI WILLIAMSON (29).

SERGEANT RIVERA (CONT'D)
Hey Saul, this kid says he killed
his father.

Detective Williamson looks over at Carlos and then back at
Sergeant Rivera.

DETECTIVE WILLIAMSON
Thanks, Danny, I'll take it from
here.

Detective Williamson walks over to Carlos.

DETECTIVE WILLIAMSON (CONT'D)
Young man, I'm Detective Williamson
with homicide. What's your name?

CARLOS
My name is Carlos Michael Davis.

DETECTIVE WILLIAMSON
You told the officer you killed
your father?

CARLOS
Yes, sir.

DETECTIVE WILLIAMSON
How old are you, Carlos?

CARLOS
I'm 12.

DETECTIVE WILLIAMSON
Where do you live?

CARLOS
I live at 3948 Bankhead Towers Lane
in the Linwood Apartments.

INT. 16TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Carlos sits down at a big metal table, opposite Lt. Jones who sits across from him.

LT. JONES
Carlos, since you're not of legal age, do you want me to stop this interview so you can get an attorney? We can proceed without one too if that's alright with you?

CARLOS
I want to tell the truth and you want me to tell the truth, so I don't need an attorney, right?

LT. JONES
Carlos, do you know the difference between the truth and a lie?

CARLOS
Yes, ma'am, I always tell the truth.

LT. JONES
That's good, Carlos. Then let's just get it out of the way now.

Lt. Jones turns on the tape recorder.

LT. JONES (CONT'D)
Carlos, I'm recording this interview. Anything you say to me now may be used against you if we decide to prosecute you. Do you understand what I've said?

CARLOS
No.

LT. JONES
It's simple, will you answer my questions?

CARLOS
Yes, ma'am.

Lt. Jones waves her hand at the two-way mirror behind her. CAPTAIN SMITH (45), African American, slim enters the interrogation room and stands in the corner of the room.

LT. JONES

Don't be alarmed, that's Captain Smith, he's in charge of the station. He'll be reviewing our interview today. Carlos, please state your full name and age for the record?

CARLOS

My name is Carlos Michael Davis and I'm 12 years old.

LT. JONES

Can you tell me where you reside?

CARLOS

I live at 3948 Bankhead Towers Lane in Atlanta.

LT. JONES

Can you please explain, in your own words, what happened on the night of July 15th?

CARLOS

My dad came home drunk and beat me. I fought him back and I hit him, he hit his head, fell and I ran away.

LT. JONES

Did you know he was dead?

Carlos holds his head down in shame for what he did. He is silent for a beat until he shakes his head.

CARLOS

I didn't know. He was lying there with his eyes open and I didn't want him to get up again and hurt me, so I ran away.

LT. JONES

How often did your father beat you?

CARLOS

There are seven days in a week, so I got beat seven days.

LT. JONES

Why were you beaten?

Carlos shrugs his shoulders.

CARLOS

I don't know, he would always find something wrong when he came home after work.

CAPTAIN SMITH

Son, do you know why you're--

LT. JONES

Did you hit and kill your father on the night of the 15th?

CARLOS

I guess-- I mean no, ma'am. I hit him, but I tried to block his swings. He kept on hitting me with the belt buckle.

LT. JONES

And what happened? What did you do?

CARLOS

I must have hit him in the throat with my hand. I used the moves my friend Pat taught me.

LT. JONES

Did he stop hitting you?

Carlos is able to remain calm during the interrogation. His nerves don't show.

CARLOS

Yes, after he fell down.

LT. JONES

Did you try and help him?

CARLOS

No, ma'am, I ran out as fast as I could. I just had to get away. I couldn't get beat anymore, I had to get out of there.

LT. JONES

Why didn't you report your father to the police or to your school?

CARLOS

He was my dad, I couldn't do that.

Lt. Jones and the Captain exchange a worrisome glance. Lt. Jones returns her attention back to Carlos.

LT. JONES

Did you hate your father?

CARLOS

Hate my dad? I could never hate him, no matter how messed up he was.

CAPTAIN SMITH

Why Carlos?

CARLOS

My dad's been through a lot since Mom died, he never forgave himself for her death.

CAPTAIN SMITH

Do you have any living relatives? An Aunt, Uncle or Grandparents?

CARLOS

My Grandparents died some time ago and my dad had no one else except me. I never knew anyone on my Mom's side of the family.

The door opens and Sergeant Rivera enters.

SERGEANT RIVERA

Lieutenant, juvey and CPS are here. Which one is he going to?

LT. JONES

Carlos, is there anything else you want to add to your statement?

CARLOS

No, ma'am.

LT. JONES

Well, I have no choice but to send you to Juvenile Hall until we can sort all of this out with the D.A.

Carlos panics. He's scared now.

CARLOS

Juvenile Hall? Why? I didn't mean to kill my Dad. He was beating me!

LT. JONES
Sergeant Rivera, take Mr. Davis
down to central booking until we
can transfer him.

Sergeant Rivera looks at Lt. Jones.

SERGEANT RIVERA
Excuse me Lieutenant, this is
clearly a case of child abuse and
accidental death. Are you sure you
want to do this?

LT. JONES
I'm sure, Sergeant: the Coroner
says it's murder, so if the D.A
says differently, then so be it.
Until then, I'm going by the
evidence presented.

Sergeant Rivera looks on with hesitation. Carlos remains
fearful for his future.

INT. LIEUTENANT JONES OFFICE - AFTERNOON

CAPTAIN SMITH knocks on the door and pokes his head in.

CAPTAIN SMITH
Kat, you got a minute?

LT. JONES
Sure, Captain. Come on in.

Captain Smith enters.

CAPTAIN SMITH
It's about the Davis boy. Why are
you sending this case forward?

LT. JONES
I've seen cases like this while
working with Special Victims. The
kid is clearly hiding something.

CAPTAIN SMITH
From everything I've seen and heard
concerning this case, Kat, and from
meeting this kid face to face, his
father has been abusing him for
years. I'm overriding you. Get the
D.A on the phone and get this kid
into CPS until a relative can be
located.

Lt. Jones sighs.

LT. JONES
Yes, Captain.

Captain Smith turns towards the door and looks back.

CAPTAIN SMITH
Are you feeling ok, Kat? You've
been a little edgy lately.

Lt. Jones' right hand begins to shake. She hides it under the table and holds it still with her left hand.

LT. JONES
I'm fine, Captain.

Captain Smith exits the office and closes the door.

Lt. Jones opens her handbag and pulls out several small bottles of rum. She takes one, drinks the contents in one gulp, and reaches for another.

INT. CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES - AFTERNOON

Several STAFF SUPERVISORS are assisting the cleanup of the CPS living area inside the CPS Facility.

Groups of BOYS and GIRLS (ages 10-15) walk past them, headed to the outside lobby with gloves on preparing for their designated chores. Carlos speaks with DAMON PUGH (13), African American, slim.

CARLOS
Hi, my name is Carlos.

DAMON
What's up, man? I'm Damon.

CARLOS
What are we doing?

DAMON
We're separated into groups. Group one takes the inside chores and group two takes the outside chores. They want to make us more responsible. We just play the game until we get out of here. You're new here, right?

Carlos nods.

DAMON (CONT'D)
You should stay in my group, I'll
show you what to do around here.

CARLOS
How long have you been here?

DAMON
Six months. No one wants an older
kid.

CARLOS
Really?

DAMON
I'm told if you're over the age of
13, you get overlooked.

Damon points out the window to a CHUBBY BLACK KID raking
leaves.

DAMON (CONT'D)
Patrick over there, he's been here
the longest. Over a year.

CARLOS
Could I be here that long?

DAMON
If you have relatives then they
will release you to them. Some of
the kids here are runaways and most
of them are abused kids that are
taken from their families or some
other legal shit. Whatcha in for?

CARLOS
I... I killed my father.

DAMON
Damn, dude! You're Tony Montana and
shit?

CARLOS
No, my name is Carlos Davis.

DAMON
Yeah, alright.

A male CPS supervisor, TERRENCE MCCOY (30s), Caucasian
approaches Carlos and Damon.

TERRENCE

Stop yapping, you two and finish
cleaning, I want this bathroom
spotless. Now get to it, let's go!

Terrence sees another group of kids not working and leaves
Carlos and Damon in the bathroom and goes over to them.

DAMON

That's Mr. McCoy: last week he put
one of the kids in the hospital for
not following the rules.

CARLOS

What happened?

DAMON

Some of the older kids decided to
go over to the girl's side of the
facility. Two of them were caught
having sex. Mr. McCoy caught one of
them and fucked him up real bad.

CARLOS

We better get to work then.

DARRYL WATSON (11), African American, slim enters and looks
over at Carlos.

DAMON

Darryl, what are you doing up here?
You're supposed to be in the other
group.

DARRYL

I'm switching places with the new
kid.

DAMON

No you're not, he's with me. Get
out of here!

DARRYL

It's a lot of work out there, plus
I've been here longer.

Darryl looks down at Carlos and kicks him.

DARRYL (CONT'D)

Hey new guy, you hear me talking to
you?

DAMON
Stop it, Darryl! I said he's with
me!

Darryl looks at Carlos. He knocks over a can of scrubbing
powder on the floor.

DARRYL
Clean this shit up!

Darryl walks out of the bathroom.

CARLOS
He really needs a hug.

Damon starts to laugh and they finish cleaning the bathroom.

EXT. THE PROFESSIONAL BUILDING - AFTERNOON

INT. PSYCHOLOGY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca is in the waiting area. The RECEPTIONIST (23),
Caucasian, looks over and acknowledges her.

RECEPTIONIST
Ms. Williams, Dr. Patterson will
see you now. Right, this way,
please.

REBECCA
Thank you.

The Receptionist escorts Rebecca into Dr. Patterson's Office.

INT. DR. PATTERSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Rebecca enters. She's greeted by DR. DAVID
PATTERSON (50), Caucasian, medium build who sits behind his
desk.

DR. PATTERSON
Hello Ms. Williams, I'm Dr.
Patterson. How are you feeling
today?

REBECCA
I'm okay.

DR. PATTERSON
May I call you Rebecca?

REBECCA

Yes.

DR. PATTERSON

Rebecca, may I offer you a bottled water, some coffee or a soda?

REBECCA

No thank you, nothing for me.

DR. PATTERSON

I read about your case in the paper. I'm sorry for your loss. How are you and your ex-husband coping?

REBECCA

We're handling it.

DR. PATTERSON

You're "handling it"? Both of your children died and your marriage of 19 years abruptly ended -- All of that plays on your psyche, Rebecca. You could suffer serious backlash on your mental state.

REBECCA

So you want to get inside my head? You're right, I've lost everything. But it's not like I'm becoming a hoarder or anything, Doctor.

Dr. Patterson eyes her intently.

DR. PATTERSON

But you're still here seeking help. So what is going on then?

REBECCA

I've had some nights where I don't remember things.

DR. PATTERSON

You're experiencing black-outs?

Rebecca nods.

REBECCA

Last week, I woke up in my daughter's bed.

(MORE)

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I remember having a headache and lying down on the couch, but the next morning, I woke up in Ellah's room in jeans and a flimsy top with a stamp from some club on my arm. I'm 44 years old, I don't go to clubs anymore.

DR. PATTERSON

Hmm. Do you mind if we talk about your past a bit?

REBECCA

Sure.

DR. PATTERSON

Tell me about your divorce. What changed after your marriage ended?

REBECCA

I don't know, I was under a lot of stress. I started having intense headaches and Randy and Ellah needed me more so than usual.

DR. PATTERSON

Was the stress money-related?

REBECCA

No, the child support and alimony checks were paying the bills, so I wasn't concerned about anything like that.

DR. PATTERSON

Interesting. And these headaches, how long have you been having them?

REBECCA

They started right after the divorce, but have become more intense after Randy and Ellah died.

DR. PATTERSON

Can you describe the headaches, Rebecca?

REBECCA

They usually happen when I'm stressed or tired. I get a chilly feeling through my body and then it becomes very hot... and then the unbearable throbbing sets in.

Dr. Patterson studies Rebecca for a long moment then jots something down in her file.

Rebecca nervously fidgets with her hand in an uncomfortable manner. She waits.

EXT. THE PROFESSIONAL BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Rebecca exits the building and begins making her way toward her car. Her cell phone rings.

REBECCA

Hello?

CASSANDRA (O.S.)

Do you remember our conversation about becoming a foster parent?

REBECCA

You were serious about that?

CASSANDRA (O.S.)

I just received a call from my friend at Social Services. She's interviewing potential foster parents today.

REBECCA

I don't know, Cassandra, I'm still going through things. Plus, I haven't run this by my Doctor yet.

CASSANDRA (O.S.)

All I'm saying is give it a try, Becca. You can't stay cooped up in that big ass house all by yourself honey. Just meet me there in an hour. What do you have to lose?

Rebecca ponders the thought as she gets into her car.

REBECCA

I suppose it could be nice, having someone to mentor again...

CASSANDRA (V.O.)

That's the spirit, Becca! I'll see you in an hour.

Rebecca sighs, hangs up the phone and gets into her car.

INT. PASTOR WALTON RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON

MARGO WALTON walks down the staircase into the large living room, where the TV is on and a breaking news headline is seen.

NEWS ANCHOR TIM JENNINGS
Breaking News! A local leader of a renowned megachurch is accused of molesting several members of his congregation. Channel 8 reporter Jim Bannister is at the scene, Jim--

JIM BANNISTER
Thanks, Tim. I was contacted by an unknown source associated with the church, who reported that Pastor Russell Walton of Sweetwater Baptist Church has been accused of molesting several boys in the youth ministry.

Several suggestive photos of Pastor Walton and THREE BLURRED OUT UNIDENTIFIED YOUNG BOYS are seen hugging and wrestling.

JIM BANNISTER (CONT'D)
According to our confidential source, Pastor Walton takes several under-aged members on unscheduled trips and provides them with alcohol in exchange for sexual favors. These explosive allegations are rocking the core of this Atlanta mega church and its now controversial Pastor...

Margo turns off the TV and frantically grabs her cell phone and dials. Derek answers.

MARGO
Derek, what the fuck is going on?
Is Russell, there!?

DEREK (O.S.)
He's out at the moment, Margo.

MARGO
Derek, do you know what's going on!?

DEREK (O.S.)
Yes, the phone won't stop ringing.

Margo is pacing uncontrollably.

MARGO

What do you know about this,
Derek!?

DEREK (O.S.)

Margo, I can't--

MARGO

You can't what, Derek? Tell Russell
about us, or you can't tell me
about him fucking those underaged
boys?! Which one is it?!

DEREK (O.S.)

I can't talk about this now, Margo.
Meet me later.

MARGO

Margo angrily hangs up.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Shit! Not this again!

NEXT: CHAPTER TWO: A WHOLE NEW WORLD