



THE CORNER

An Original One Act

by

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Directed by Val Sinckler

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Scene 1—A Phone Call

It is early evening. Dutch is on his porch. He is on the phone with Lauren, his ex-girlfriend. They haven't spoken in months. Lauren is seen across the stage, sitting on her bed with a television on. The two of them had a falling out, because of what Lauren did to him. It is apparent in both of their voices that neither of them has forgotten about the incidents. They are on the phone. Dutch is very short with Lauren.

LAUREN
Hey, babe, I heard you were back in town

DUTCH
Yeah.

LAUREN
Well... How are you?

DUTCH
Chillin'

LAUREN
How's school?

DUTCH
It's whatever.
(beat)

LAUREN
How's your mom? Your sister?

DUTCH
Fine.

LAUREN
That's good. (beat) Why are you being like this?

DUTCH
What do you mean?

LAUREN
You're being so mean right now.

DUTCH
Bullshit.

LAUREN

Yeah, you are. You're being an asshole. I call you up to check up on you and see how you were doing...

DUTCH

(interrupts Lauren) I didn't ask you to check up on me. You called. I answered. You asked some questions. So you got your answers. You're nobody special

LAUREN

Fuck you. We were practically married.

DUTCH

And now we're not.

LAUREN

That doesn't mean it disappears

DUTCH

It does when you spend it with somebody else.

LAUREN

What are you talking about?

DUTCH

How's... um... what's his name...? Julian?

(beat)

That's what the fuck I thought, and that's exactly why you aint shit. Yeah, we were practically married, until some other nigga stepped in the picture. So, for your sake, *and* mine, I'm trying to be civil. Be happy with what you get, otherwise, don't take it.

LAUREN

Julian wasn't anything.

DUTCH

(Said sarcastically, with the malicious intent of causing emotional damage)

Did you kiss him? (beat) Let him feel on you? (beat) Did you fuck him?

LAUREN

That's not fair

DUTCH

It wasn't when it happened either.

LAUREN

We've been talking for like two minutes, and this is the shit that you bring up?

DUTCH

Well, you bring up the point that I am being an asshole right now, and I thought I would kindly point out what a horrible person you were so as to explain my behavior. Simple.

LAUREN
Fuck you.

DUTCH
Exactly.

LAUREN
That's not fair. (beat) I'm going to go now.

DUTCH
Peace

LAUREN
Peace? Yeah, whatever. Bye.

Lauren hangs up the phone angrily and throws it down on her bed. She wrestles with the idea of calling Dutch back. She plays with the remote to the TV, she fidgets with her phone. As she is debating this, Dutch calls up Carv.

DUTCH
What up, man?

CARV
Chillin.

DUTCH
Right, right. I feel you

CARV
You aight, man?

DUTCH
I'm straight. Got caught up in some drama with Lauren.

CARV
Why you still fuckin with her...?

DUTCH
Get the fuck outta here with that shit. Tried to come at me on some "you're an asshole" shit. I just wanna be like "you're a ho."

CARV
Shit, nigga, that's what she is

DUTCH
You aint right

CARV
Am I lyin?

DUTCH
(beat) Anyways, I aint tryin to stress it.

CARV
Go find a honey dip, man. Get your mind off it. Get your mind right.

DUTCH
You know it aint like that. Yo, You tryinta roll to Harold's?

CARV
Yeah. All yall niggas goin?

(Dutch looks down and sees an incoming call from Lauren)

DUTCH
Yo, hol' up, it's Lauren... I'll be right back

CARV
Don't pick that shit up, man. Don't do it

DUTCH
Its whatever
(Clicks over)

What?

LAUREN
Nothing.

DUTCH
Then why the fuck did you call?

LAUREN
Well... no, reason

(Dutch hangs up and calls Carv back) (Lauren is sitting on her bed, curled up in a ball, and she knows not to call Dutch back, so she won't. It's killing her not to, though)

DUTCH
Yeah, so, that shit was awkward...

CARV

Told you nigga. You don't listen to me. Get off it, man.

DUTCH

I'll see you at Harold's.

(Dutch remains on his porch. He leans back on the stairs and looks up at the sky. There is a sudden sharp pain in his chest, as if a dagger is twisting in his heart. Dutch flips open his phone and considers calling Lauren. He does.)

LAUREN

Hello...?

DUTCH

Hey. My bad. Aight? I'm still real sensitive about that shit.

LAUREN

But it was a long time ago

DUTCH

But like you said, we were practically married. Makes a huge difference. Things don't disappear like that.

LAUREN

I know... but...

DUTCH

Are you still with him?

LAUREN

No.

DUTCH

So it was a waste of your time, right? (beat) You lose something great, and then you get left in the dirt. And then you got the nerve to call me back? To try to be friendly with me? That aint cool.

LAUREN

I jut want to apologize. I guess. You're still important to me. I think about you all the time.

DUTCH

Right. And I think about getting you out of my head. Out of my life. "I've changed"--First of all, even if you have changed, that means nothing as far as we go. There's nothing left here, and there never will be again. Second of all, don't expect me to pass that shit up. You broke my heart. Shattered it. I don't even know why I'm talking to yo ass. It's like, what if I'd told you that I cheated on you? Would you be talking to me? (beat)

DUTCH/LAUREN

No/Yes

DUTCH

No you wouldn't.

LAUREN

Yes, I would.

DUTCH

Good. I'm glad we can still talk.

LAUREN

Huh?

DUTCH

Yeah. I'm glad you can talk to me right now.

LAUREN

What are you saying?

DUTCH

What do you think I'm saying? I dipped. You gave me a reason to.

(beat)

Don't call me anymore. We're done. We've been done.

LAUREN

Did you really?

(beat)

Did you!?

(Beat)

Answer me!

DUTCH

It was a long, long time ago. Get over it. (beat) (beat) I have to go. I'll talk to you later.

Dutch hesitates to hang up. A long, awkward pause occurs. Dutch hangs up before Lauren can say anything.

END SCENE

Scene 2—The Stoop

(Lights up to reveal Frankie sitting on the stoop and Dutch standing next to him. Dutch is very animated, while Frankie looks calm and collected. Dutch is holding a bottle of Sprite, there is a Coke and a bag of Flamin' hot Cheetos at Frankie's feet)

(BIG O walks up)

BIG O

Big Poppa Sexy is in the building. You know how it goes. Whats good with yall?

DUTCH

You know me, back with the fam. Relaxin’.

FRANKIE

The usual. I’m good

BIG O

Yo, so what’s the plan for the evenin’?

DUTCH

We finna go meet up with Carv at Harold’s. (beat) So what’s good?

BIG O

Momma is good. Pops is good. Amy is good even though these young niggas is tryin’ to get at her. (beat) You know what I say?

FRANKIE

What’s that?

BIG O

FUCK THAT! Man, these little kids come over and try to get at *me*. They try to run game on *me*, like ‘Well, Mr. Gonzalez, I really like hangin’ out with your sister and she’s really cool. So um...’ and I’m like ‘get yo broke ass outta here!’

(laughter from ALL)

But on the real, when they come over, I’m like ‘yeah, you can take her out’ with that sound in my voice that’s like ‘yo, if you so much as try to touch my sister, imma have my niggas’—that’s yall two—‘yeah, imma have my niggas come and get ya nuts!’

DUTCH

Sheeit... I have cats scared from the second they walk in my door. Everybody at Teresa’s school knows who I am, even when I’m in Cali. Im that nice nigga, but I’m that nigga that’ll snap, take a plane from cali to yo mothafuckin’ doorstep at three in the mornin’, then jump yo ass in yo own bed, walk into ya moms’s room, wake her up, be like ‘good morning, ma’am. Pardon the interruption, but your son and I needed to have a mature conversation. If you have any questions, please, have him call my sister’—and then I’d bounce.

(laughter from ALL)

FRANKIE

I understand that, but me? I just have a nice conversation with all the boys that try to get at my sister. I just tell them the deal. Don’t try to threaten them. Just give it to them straight.

DUTCH

OOOOH... Mr. Straightedge, not wantin’ to scare nobody. Not wantin’ no trouble.

FRANKIE

that should be you not wanting to cause any trouble—Professor!

DUTCH

Nigga, just cuz I go to college don't mean shit! I could roll up here anytime and handle what I need to handle.

BIG O

But Professor, what about the study of studiology? Don't you find it difficult to be down with your, as many like to call it, your "peoples?"

DUTCH

(smile on his face) Fuck you, O! You know me

FRANKIE

Right. The ugly bastard with a pine tree up his ass!

BIG O

Look at you, son. You know it's true. And besides, pine tree seems to be the perfect scent for you. It matches the elegance of your intelligence (he takes a bow).

DUTCH

Why thank you, my good sir! I really, really do appreciate that.(beat) Bitch.
(Laughter from ALL)

BIG O

Yo, I feel like I haven't seen yo' ass in forever. Like you been gone and shit.

DUTCH

Nigga, I've been at school. Stayin' on the grind. Tryin' to do music. Tryin' to be studious and shit. It's whatever though. I just do what I do out there, kick it, study, ciphers, rhyme, you know, do shows.

FRANKIE

We miss you, man. I hear a lot about you, though--Teresa helps me keep tabs on you since you never call anybody.

DUTCH

I ain't got time to call nobody. I'm either at work, or at classes.

BIG O

Shit, I'm at work and at classes just like you are, but I still kick it with knucklehead over here all the time.

DUTCH

Yeah. I understand... but nigga, you go to a city college!
(laughter from Dutch and Frankie)

FRANKIE

He does have a point.

DUTCH

Annnnd on top of all that, I got me a little lady. So yeah, yall niggas chill. Time for my niggas is when I get back home. And besides, I call ya'll like once a week. I aint your girlfriend. Yall aint gotta be all on my nuts like you want em or something. 'Sides, ya'll niggas never call *me*.

BIG O

I'm cakin' too. Same girl, same shit.

DUTCH

Salsa picante?!?!?

BIG O

Yeah, nigga! Hell yeah, salsa picante. I take her to my mother's taco restaurant and teach her dirty words in Spanish. She calls me "papi." (hip thrusting motion) and I'm like, 'yeah, mami, te gusta? Verdad?'

(he goes into his own little zone)

(DUTCH smacks Big O on the side of his head, mid thrust)

Huh? What? What the fuck, man?

(Laughter from DUTCH and FRANKIE)

DUTCH

I ain't know you could move like that! (more laughter) Please, brotha, tell me that you stay on the bottom! She hasn't passed out from you suffocating her, has she?

BIG O

Nope! In fact, she finds my folds sexy... She says they keep her warm, nigga. Yo' girl likes em too, and I don't even know who she is!

FRANKIE

Ya'll are wild. You're hurting my delicate ears!

BIG O

This belly (pats his belly) is a Buddha belly. My girl rubs this shit for good luck. And then we salsa in the sheets, motherfucker...!

FRANKIE

(pushes Big O playfully) Shut up, man... So, Dutch. A white girl? *(beat)* Yes, we know. No, you didn't tell us. Already know the details. *(beat)* Teresa loves you very much.

DUTCH

That girl... she got a big mouth.

BIG O

Mr. Dutch Deuce done gone off to college, and now he turnin' white. What they call yall niggas...? Reverse Oreos, right? My man, Dutch... with a white girl?!?!?! *And* a degree?

DUTCH

First of all, I aint got my degree yet. Second of all, so what if she's a white girl? And third, she look like she's mixed. And last—fuck you and yo god damn couch, nigga!

BIG O

A white girl? (beat) That's funny

DUTCH

It's funny? What's funny **about Stephanie?**

FRANKIE

Yeah...?

(beat)

BIG O

I don't know, man. I just never picture this gorilla lookin' motherfucker over here gettin' with a white girl. Let alone gettin' with a girl.

DUTCH

Nigga, don't you ever disrespect yo daddy! I'll beat yo ass!

FRANKIE

But Dutch, he wasn't talking to *me*, he was talkin' to you.

(laughter from ALL)

BIG O

Hey, my moms... Leave her out of this, aight?

(Dutch lifts up shirt, pulls out waist line of pants slightly, looks down and waves)

DUTCH

Hi Mrs. Gonzalez!

FRANKIE

Hey, O. I heard your mom has a myspace page.

BIG O

She does...

DUTCH

She's cool, man. Cute, smart, Stanford girl. Moms even says she's cool, cuz she treats me right.

BIG O

Better than whatsherface?

DUTCH

Hell yeah, man. Stephanie is mad faithful. I get to be all romantic and shit, and she don't take none of it for granted. In fact, she's all romanticizin' me and shit right back. It feels good, bro.

FRANKIE

Man, I told you Lauren was no good. She was playin you. She still is. (beat) At least you got something good in Steph. It's hard to come by so yeah, Congrats, man.

DUTCH

Preciate it. (beat) I hope Lauren gets her shit together, man.

FRANKIE

She will. She needs to—doesn't want a one on one convo with me, messin' with my boy! Give it time, man. She's still on the same thing... But she'll learn. He's messing her up, just like she messed you up.

DUTCH

Shit, I told her from the beginning that that nigga was nothing but trouble. That's the type of nigga that just wants pussy, and then he bounces. Problem is though that he gets these females attached, gets them hooked and what not, runnin' game and shit. He fucks em, leaves em hangin' and then comes back for more whenever the fuck he pleases. That shit aint right.

BIG O/FRANKIE

I feel you...

DUTCH

But yo, Lauren played the shit outta me, and kept a straight face about it. Makes me wonder how long she was playin' me. (beat) Shit makes me scared about Steph.

FRANKIE

Whats your gut tell you?

DUTCH

That she's gravy. That me and her are gravy.

FRANKIE

Aight then. That's that. And if yall split up, or if she does you bogus, then you move on. You know how to do that, now.

DUTCH

It ain't that easy, bro. You know me. Yeah, I'm a gangsta ass nigga goin' to Stanford (laughter fro ALL), but I still got a heart that gets stuck on the girl I'm with. And it sucks even more when shit ends over bull. Especially over some bum ass nigga who aint got shit on you. I know yall feel me.(beat) And the thing is, a nigga like me, niggas like yall two, people take for granted. Lauren did, and the chick before that, too. I know the same happens with yall. We put shit out for the world to take, but we don't get shit back.

FRANKIE

But it's not always like that. You got guys like us to fall back on.

BIG O

You know, we brothers-- brothers til we die. And even then, we gon be kickin it, drinkin champagne with Pac and Big and Sinatra and shit.

FRANKIE

On top of that, all of these people who do us dirt—it's a blessing. we're strong, man. We strong as hell because of it. And think of it like this, if you don't get done bogus, you don't move on. You don't get done bogus, you don't know what feels right.

BIG O

...this nigga...

FRANKIE

Really, though. For real, when it comes down to it, all of that—it makes us find another road. These streets, man, same thing with them. We see the potholes and detours for the folks around us, so we gotta pull them up, too. It could be socially, or economically, or whatever you think it needs to be, but pull em up. You know? Then'll give back to you. It just might not be what you expect. Everyone gives back differently.

DUTCH

True

FRANKIE

It's not right, man. Dutch, you've come back to the same thing you left. This corner hasnt changed.

DUTCH

That's bullshit, though. These little niggas see us, goin' to school. I'm at Stanford, this nigga's at Robert Morris <cough>bitch<cough>, and you about to apply to Harvard and all those uppity schools—that's changin' these little niggas out here. They see us, same ol cats, the niggas that sit on the corner with a couple of pops—we don't smoke, we don't drink, we don't carry heat, we don't slang, we don't do none of that shit. But still, no nigga will come close to this motherfuckin' stoop, cuz they respect what we doin'. And these lil' niggas see that we makin' moves without puttin' other cats in danger. These little kids see they got an opportunity. These little kids see us going to school, and it inspires them, bro. it's just us three. we got the power of image. I'm still the blackest motherfucker around here, and im finna graduate Stanford. That shit is powerful. Frankie, you bout to go to college, and look where you came from. Same place these lil' niggas came from. It's you, bro-- they watchin you.

BIG O

Yeah, man. These little cats walk up to me all the time 'what's school like? Where's Dutch at?' And when I tell em you out in Cali for school, they jaws drop.

FRANKIE

Yeah man (beat). I cant wait til we get old... We're going to be so cool. My kids are going to run up to you on some "Uncle Deuce! Uncle Deuce! Uncle Deuce!", then they're going to see O and be like "Daddy, is it safe under Uncle Fat Man's belly?"
(laughter from ALL)

BIG O

Seriously, man, it's good to be back with all yall. Dutch, I'm glad you're back, bro.

DUTCH

It's good to be back. We aint skipped a beat. Not a damn beat.

(Cellphone rings. Dutch answers)

DUTCH

Yo, what up, Carv?

CARV

Im chillin, you?

DUTCH

Yeah, nigga, I'm chillin'. I'm chillin'. Posted up at the spot. Where you at?

CARV

Over at this honey's place

DUTCH

(covers mouth piece with hand, to Big O and Frankie) yall see this shit? this nigga cakes more than I do! (turns back to phone conversation)

BIG O

(Yelling to the phone) Big Poppa Sexy is in the motherfukin' building!!!!

FRANKIE

Your cakin' ass better be at harold's when we get there.

CARV

Tell them niggas to get off my nuts

DUTCH

He said the same thing I said—get off his nuts. (back to the phone) (Laughter from ALL) Aight, bro. We'll see you over there

CARV

Yeah

DUTCH

One. (hangs up) Let's bounce, yall.

(Frankie rises from the stoop and dusts off his pants. The three of them turn to walk off. Frankie begins a beatbox, Big O and Dutch begin to freestyle, uttering “yos” and “yeahs”)

END SCENE

BALL TO THROW AROUND
FOOD FOR THE SCENE

SCENE 3—Harold’s Chicken Shack

Stage right—there is a place to order—a counter with a thick glass window separates the cashier and customers. Stage left—there are a few tables, each with four seats. Two seats on each opposing sides. Further to the left is the entrance to Harold’s

OLD LADY is behind the counter taking people’s orders and handling cash. CARV has joined DUTCH, BIG O and FRANKIE there. Everyone has ordered but DUTCH. Everyone but Dutch is huddled up a few feet off to the side of Dutch. They are all pushing each other, shoving each other, in a playful manner. It is very subtle, but it suggests that they all know each other very well.

OLD LADY

(to Carv) Thank you, Carver. It’s good to see you, baby. (beat) C’mon, David. You know Mama Jean don’t got all the time in the world.

DUTCH

Sorry. Sorry. Sorry. So how you doin, mama Jean?

OLD LADY

I’m good baby. Whatchu gettin’?

DUTCH

Same ol’, same ol’. Let me get the...

OLD LADY

(interrupts) I know, white half, salt, pepper, mild sauce on the side. Oh, and a Root Beer (DUTCH smiles) You want anything else?

DUTCH

No thank you, ma’am. I appreciate it.
(OLD LADY rings up the order)
(beat)

OLD LADY

You boys sittin down?

DUTCH

Yeah.

OLD LADY

you know I can bring you your order, right?

DUTCH

I know. I figure I could wait. Keep you some company. Chat with you a lil bit.

OLD LADY

Why thank you. (beat) You know what I like about you and your friends? Yall little knuckleheads are always so polite. All these other youngins don't got manners.

DUTCH

It's alright. It happens. All of us had the same mommas, and all of them had some common sense. Raised us right.

OLD LADY

Speakin of which, how is your momma? I saw her in here a little while ago. She was getting' some food for you and your daddy. (beat) Why'd you let her come all the way up here by herself?

DUTCH

She was comin' home from work.

OLD LADY

That late?

DUTCH

Yeah, she stay workin'. You know how she is

OLD LADY

You know, your momma, I've known her for twenty years. Just as long as you've been alive.

DUTCH

Longer...

OLD LADY

I've seen her work for you and your little sister. Her and your daddy be workin' so hard. She shouldn't be workin that late. That's too late for her. But she do it, because she love you. Aint nothin' like a momma's love.

DUTCH

We all know that.

(beat)

OLD LADY

The four of ya'll have gotten so big. It's crazy. (beat) So, how's school?

DUTCH

It's aight. Just trying to maintain. I just got through with the first year

OLD LADY

How was it? Any cutiepies in your life?

DUTCH

(smirks) I mean, it was aight. I was strugglin' a little bit towards the end of the year, but yeah, I got me a little cutie.

OLD LADY

She look good don't she? (beat) (Dutch nods and smiles) She better be treatin' you right, otherwise imma have a fit. Some hot flashes on her little behind (both laugh). (sight of relief)... what it's like to be old and have my kind of energy... wait til' you get old, boy. You young folk just don't get it.

DUTCH

Oh, believe me, I get it.

OLD LADY

Hold on a minute... (out the window, to Carv, Big O, and Frankie) Hey, boys! (the fellas look up) Your food is ready.

BIG O/FRANKIE/CARV

(all approach the window slowly) Thank you, ma'am.

CARV

(To Dutch, as they walk away) Bring yo ass on, nigga, we aint talked in a minute

DUTCH

That's cuz yo ass stay incog all the damn time

OLD LADY

Hey, watch your language around these parts. There are women present.

DUTCH/CARV

Sorry. (both of them smile)

(Carv and Big O sit facing the door to the restaraunt)

DUTCH

It's good to be back, you know? It's nothin' like home. Nothin' like it at all.

OLD LADY

So whatchu studyin'? You gon' make some money?

DUTCH

I'm studyin' African and African American Studies

OLD LADY

And what you gon' do with that? You cant do nothin' with that. You sure as hell cant buy me a house

DUTCH

We'll see. It's the only thing that's got my attention right now.

OLD LADY

Well, take your time, take things slow. You got three years left. Whatever you do, follow your heart. (beat) And don't get your cutie pregnant.

DUTCH

C'mon, you know I aint that stupid.

OLD LADY

Yeah, youre smart, but yo little head might think more than the big one. (beat) You using condoms?

DUTCH

Hey! That aint yo business (smiles). But, yeah. Im bein smart. I'm watchin' out.

(Old Lady goes and grabs Dutch's order)

OLD LADY

Here go your food. (beat) Look, baby, keep your head up, alright. Do what's right for you. But make some money while you at it. Whatever you do, we all proud of you around here. These little shorties comin' in here talkin' bout Dutch this and Dutch that. Be careful, alright?

DUTCH

You ain't got nothin' to worry about.

OLD LADY

Well, go enjoy your boys. Have fun. And stay out of trouble.

DUTCH

Aight, I will. You be safe. I'll see you later, mama. Prolly next week.

OLD LADY

Alright. Have a good one.

Dutch motions a goodbye and walks over to the table. He sits with his back towards the door. The table is messy with napkins, bags, and bottles of pop everywhere. Throughout the conversation, the fellas pick their chicken clean, they steal fries and mild sauce from each other, they lick their own fingers clean, and they really seem to enjoy each other's company. Although

all four of them have not been in the same room together for nearly a year, they still click seamlessly.

DUTCH

This nigga (pointing to Carv)... Man, this nigga is ghost. Where the fuck you been at?

BIG O

(Carv motions like he is going to respond, Big O interrupts him) Cakin'. Fuckin'. Not doin' a damn thing but all them females that stay on him.... After they come off of me

CARV

Yo' big ass... What can I say, bro? What do you want me to do?

FRANKIE

Chill with your boys a little bit more. We ain't no females...

BIG O

But we are sexy...

CARV

Ya'll niggas is ugly.

DUTCH

Ya momma...

(beat)

CARV

Professor. May I ask a question?

DUTCH

Why, absolutely, sir.

CARV

How them hos treating you?

FRANKIE

Are you serious!? How is that the first thing that you ask him, after you haven't seen him in, what, 8 months?

DUTCH

(British accent) Well, to be honest, the hos are treating me well.

CARV

The white bitches treatin' you good? They give good head? I heard they got ass.

BIG O

Nigga, are you... you... you somethin' else.

DUTCH

Well, to be quite honest, white bitches are not my fancy. They are often studious and the studiousness causes them to be quite serious. (Breaks British accent) Nah, nigga, I got me a wifey.

CARV

F'real!? Awww shit, nigga! A real live white one. Is she tight? She good? You be hittin' that shit from the back.

BIG O

Dog... Listen... you listening? (beat) Don't be so damn thirsty (beat) and shut the fuck up!

FRANKIE

He's got a point, Carv. You do talk a lot. You are thirsty, and you do sound stupid.

BIG O

I bet you he does hit it from the back, and I bet you they cuddle afterwards...

ALL

Sheeeeeeeittttt....!!!!

BIG O

And then when this nigga falls asleep, she get on a plane, flies her ass to my place, get some of big poppa sexy right here, and is back before he wake up

DUTCH

Is that why she always so greasy in the mornin'? From rubbin' up on yo' ass?

BIG O

Exactly. She makes bacon in my grease, too, nigga. Don't get it twisted. Extra crispy.

FRANKIE

She serves me a continental breakfast. I wake up in the morning, and there is my eggs and toast on the bed stand.

DUTCH

Man, fuck ya'll. (beat). Yes, we do cuddle. Aight? Leave me alone. (beat) Carv, what's really good with you though, for real? We don't even talk on the phone no more.

BIG O/FRANKIE

Yeah.

CARV

I've been on the grind. I stay on the grind. I'm working now, trying to get some cash to fix up the car.

BIG O

Since when the fuck does yo lazy ass have a job?

CARV

Since ya mom started asking for child support. (All laugh) Naw, man. Since I aint in school, I feel bad moochin off of moms and pops. So, I gotta make ends meet. Plus you know me, I got my car, and I'm tryin' to race and what not. So yeah, I work like 60 hour weeks over at the Board of Elections, pushin' paper.

FRANKIE

I heard that job is... wack.

CARV

You ain't lying. But it pays good. (beat) The other thing, especially you, O, that I think ya'll will be happy about... I found jesus. (a look of bewilderment comes over everyone's face)

(beat)

(beat)

Yeah. My girl was bent over and I look up, and on her wall, there's a picture of Jesus on the cross. I threw up a couple of Hail Mary's, and then went back to work. Jesus gave me the strength to work that shit right.

FRANKIE

You're going straight to hell.

CARV

WHAT!!!??? I found Jesus! leave me alone!

BIG O

And Jesus looked down upon you and said, "Taketh thy fruitith, and bangeth thy mistress from behindeth." May we all pray...

They all bend their heads in prayer

ALL

Amen

(beat)

(laughter)

FRANKIE

Religion, man.

DUTCH

You should see these niggas at school.

CARV

Jesus freaks?

DUTCH

Some of them. It's just, damn. Niggas cant take things for what they are. Everything gotta be divine intervention or some shit.

BIG O

God is watching you, Dutch. He is watching you and everything you do.

FRANKIE

You're a puppet, Dutch. A puppet.

DUTCH

That's what folks would prolly say.

BIG O

Every Latino, deep down inside, is a Catholic. That's all I gotta say about religion

FRANKIE

I mean, it makes sense.

DUTCH

Exactly.

CARV

Hey, nigga, for real... have you found jesus?

DUTCH

It's weird, yall. I aint religious or nothin', but I pray from time to time.

CARV

If you aint religious, nigga, who you pray to?

BIG O

Deez nuts?

FRANKIE

In your mouth?

CARV

Are salty?

(all laugh)

DUTCH

It's somethin', bro. I don't know. It's just some shit about believing in something that makes shit better.

BIG O

I'm right there with you, brotha. Bein' able to talk to somebody, somebody or somethin' that you think can help. It's on that whole tip, if you get sad or some shit, and you talk out loud.

CARV

What the fuck yall niggas talk out loud for?

DUTCH

Scare niggas. Niggas think I'm crazy and they stay the fuck away from me.

BIG O

Naw, man, you talk out loud cuz you want somebody to help you. Not cuz you tryin to be stupid. I don't know, man, we all need somebody to talk to. It aint jesus, it aint buddah or allah or none of that shit, it's just, yeah, some nigga, some grimy ass nigga who done seen a whole bunch of shit and knows how to deal with it. That grimy nigga is sittin on a cloud—he aint pullin no strings or nothin', he's just there to listen.

FRANKIE

When'd you become a philosopher?

BIG O

It aint no philosophy shit, bro. It's just how I'm feelin. It's the truth.

CARV

So you just talk out loud?

BIG O

Naw, I talk out loud with a purpose. Everything is with a purpose.

FRANKIE

I feel you on that. Talk to somebody, and they listen. Pretending somebody is listening, and then, like magic, the weight lifts off your shoulders.

BIG O

It's just this whole – yeah, its this thing. It's gotta be somebody who runs shit. Science don't explain everything, and the only other thing I can think of is magic.

DUTCH

Me, when I was four, the day I turned four, I wished for a little sister, and bam, Ma is pregnant with big head. It's somethin', man, I'm tellin' you.

(beat)

(beat)

FRANKIE

Besides, how do you explain karma? Karma doesn't play games at all. You do something, and it comes back to you, real fast, or real slow. But it comes back.

Nobody gets away from it. (beat). So check this. There's this comic book called "Preacher." there's this dude in it, his name is the Saint of Killers.

BIG O

Sheeeeiit... I already know that I wouldn't fuck with that nigga.

FRANKIE

He was a confederate soldier.

CARV

Yup. That's it... It's over... Aint fuckin' with him

FRANKIE

F'real. God had this dudes family killed by some outlaws. Set those dudes up. This dude, the new angel of death, rolls up to heaven, shootin angels and what not. The end of the comic book series is this—the Saint, confronting God, shooting him, and taking his throne.

BIG O

(loudly) GOD DAAAYYYUM!!!!

CARV

He get ladies? I hope so.

(makes a gun with his hand)

CARV

Bitch, give me yo' number.

FRANKIE

The point is this. Every man, every woman, who ever it is, has his or hers coming to them. It doesn't matter. Everybody gets it. It can be good or bad, doesn't matter. But they get it.

CARV

Sheeeeiit... I wonder what I got comin' to me.

BIG O

Prolly somebody breakin' your heart. Watch. Yo' ass, finna fall in love with somebody, and she's finna be like "aight, nigga. I love you. Oh, but here go my other man. Peace."

FRANKIE

"oh, Carv. I love you. You mean... what is that fine, fine young thing walkin' by...?"

DUTCH

"oooooh, its my dream man. Look at him, he look like Will Smith and Denzel had a baby... Oh, I'm sorry, Carv. I still love you too."

CARV

I prolly do have it coming. But whatever. Aint no hos gon' be runnin' my life.

(The fellas are laughing and joking around. Lauren walks in Harold's and does not notice the guys sitting at the table. She is on the phone with a friend. She walks to the Old Lady to place her order. The following takes place while she is ordering)

BIG O

Awwwww shit. Look who the fuck it is....

DUTCH

Who...? (beat) Dog... Seriously... Why'd you have to point that out? I was doin' alright til you pointed that shit out.

FRANKIE

It's alright, bro. Ignore it. Ignore her. Eat your food, or else I will.

CARV

(loud enough so that Lauren can hear them) MAN, FUCK HER! SHE AINT DO DUTCH RIGHT!

BIG O

YEAH. LAUREN AINT SHIT! I HEARD SHE WAS FUCKIN' WITH LIKE FIFTY NIGGAS!!!

(Lauren looks over, and a look of shock and hurt comes over her face. She tries not to pay attention, but from time to time, their comments draw her attention back)

BIG O/CARV

(in the style of the Ludacris song)

YOU's A HO! YOU's A HO! YOU's A HO! I SAID THAT YOU's A HO!

DUTCH

For real, ya'll, cut that shit out, right now.

BIG O

Fuck that, dog.

CARV

She deserves this shit. C'mon, man. You aint gonna say nothing!?! (beat) I HEARD SHE WAS DIRTY!

BIG O

I HEARD SHE GOT THE CLAP! NOW SHE GOT A STANDING OVATION WITH ALL THEM NIGGAS SHE BEEN WITH!

(Dutch, In an effort to join in with his boys, to not appear out of place, he begins to hassle her, too. He doesn't speak as loud as Big O and Carv, but he does speak loud enough for her to hear. He does so with discomfort).

DUTCH

YEAH! I WALKED PAST HER HOUSE, AND I HEARD A ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

(Dutch's comment catches her attention more than the others. She slowly approaches the table)

DUTCH

FUCK HER!

LAUREN

No, Dutch. Fuck you. Fuck you, Dutch. And Oscar. (beat) Carv—you of all people should not be talking. fuck you too, Frankie!

FRANKIE

For what!?! What did I do?

LAUREN

What!?! You think that because you don't say anything that means you're not part of it!?! You're sitting here with these bastards and letting them talk shit and not trying to get them to stop. That is just as messed up as saying stuff. Fuck all of you!

DUTCH

You prolly would, if you had the chance!

LAUREN

No, Dutch. I wouldn't. I wouldn't do that, and you know it!

BIG O

I don't believe it! Do yall think that if we was all butt ass naked right now, she would be doing us?

CARV

She'd be on all of us like it was nothing. Nothing at all.

BIG O

(hip thrusting motion) Blaow!

OLD LADY

(To Lauren) Young Lady, your order is ready.

(Lauren walks over to the counter, eyes watering up)

OLD LADY

You alright?

LAUREN

I'm fine. Thank you. Have a wonderful night.

(FRANKIE gets up from his seat and approaches Lauren)
(turns to Frankie) What?

FRANKIE

Lauren, I'm sorry about that, aight? You know Dutch can be an asshole. He's angry.

LAUREN

No shit. So am I. But you don't see me acting a fool. I'm tired of him.

FRANKIE

Be tired of him. Stay tired of him. But you know he doesn't mean it, right?

LAUREN

If he didn't mean it, he wouldn't say it.

FRANKIE

What'd I tell you? He's hurt. So are you. (beat) (beat) Just leave it alone.

LAUREN

I'm just trying to make things right.

FRANKIE

I know. I know. He's not ready though. And to be real, I don't think you are either. You aren't ready to talk to him. He still gets under your skin. He's the same too. You get on his damn nerves. Just stop. Give him time. Take time for yourself. Its not gonna get better until you let it. (beat) Dutch is my boy, but he aint good for you right now. Get away from him.

LAUREN

Yeah.*(As she is walking out, she stops at the table where the guys are sitting).*
You guys disgust me... Dutch, don't ever call me again. This is the last time you do something like this to me...

(She storms out. Everyone at the table is in awe).

(beat) FRANKIE sits back down. OLD LADY approaches table to get the trash.

FRANKIE

Dude, get your shit together. Seriously

OLD LADY

Boys, what was that about?

CARV

Yeah, Dutch... What was that all about?

DUTCH

Shut up, dude.

(Dutch gets up to help old lady to collect the trash. They take it to the garbage can. They stand there and talk for a while)

OLD LADY

You wanna hear what I gotta say?

DUTCH

I guess...

OLD LADY

I remember when I was that young ladies age—me and Cleophus Brown, we was the hottest thing in town. Always together. Always in love. Always us two. And I don't know. We was together about 6 months, maybe seven, something like that. For some reason, I started actin funny, I started pullin away from him. I think I was scared. You know what he did? (beat) He went off and had a lil thing with Susie Johnson, up over there on 67th. And I hated him for it. To this day, even after gettin married, havin two kids, three grandbabies, I'm still hurtin. And I yelled at him, screamed at him, gossiped about him, hurt him the way he hurt me. You know, when your heart breaks, you do stupid shit. I've done it, ya momma's done, everybody's done it. Don't mean you a bad person, just means you got your heart broke, and you need to fix it. Heart break aint pretty. I know it aint pretty. (beat) Now young girl that just came in, correct me if I'm wrong, but yall was together. One of yall did some stupid shit, cuz you human, and now yall are heartbroken. (beat) Well you need to suck it up, move on, and find what's good about the situation. Don't ignore the heartbreak, but don't ignore the good in people either. I know you got a good heart, and she got one too, otherwise you wouldn't have been with her. But you're bein stupid right now.

DUTCH

Yeah, I know.

OLD LADY

That aint right, what you boys just did. I aint hear all of it, but it aint right. And you know its not. Be stupid. be hurt, baby, but don't let that ruin the good in folks. You aint a bad person, and neither is she. Don't let it keep goin like that.

DUTCH

Yeah. Thanks. (give OLD LADY a kiss on the forehead)

OLD LADY

Keep your head up. Don't let her or nobody else pull it down.

BIG O

Where you going?

DUTCH

I'm going to fix shit...

BIG O

Nigga, I'm takin your food
END SCENE

Scene 4—Chasing After

Dutch steps outside the door, and scans the street, only to find Lauren sitting at the bus stop crying. Dutch gets to the bus stop by moving somewhere in between a jog and a run. When he arrives, he is out of breath. He sits down next to Lauren.

DUTCH
Look... Lauren... I'm sorry. Aight?

LAUREN
Like always, right? Good. Get away from me.

DUTCH
What? Why? I didn't do anything wrong.

LAUREN
You didn't do anything wrong?! Are you fucking blind? Are you stupid?

DUTCH
Yo, I'm just tryin' to make sure you're alright

LAUREN
I'm fine.

DUTCH
Are you, really?

LAUREN
What do you think, Dutch? What do you think!? Huh? Do I look alright!?! (beat)

DUTCH
I'm sorry for the boys hassling you. I tried to get them to stop...

LAUREN
You think it's about them hassling me? You think that's it? That that's the only thing bothering me right now?

DUTCH
No, I seriously tried to get them to stop. It upset me when they started. I didn't even notice that you'd walked in. Next thing I know, they're sitting there clowning on you, and I'm like "yo, what the hell are yall doing?"

LAUREN

Did you stick up for me? Did you tell them what they were saying was wrong? Did you do anything to help me out?

(beat)

DUTCH

Naw.

LAUREN

Exactly. You didn't do anything. You've never done anything. God forbid that you show some emotion. God forbid you stick up for somebody. That you do the right thing.

DUTCH

The right thing is staying faithful, Lauren—you seemed to have difficulty with that one.

LAUREN

And you have a right to say that? You have a right to talk about being faithful? No. You're a fucking hypocrite. And NO. Don't try to switch shit on me. Don't try to put blame on me right now, when you're the one who fucked up. You left *me* alone.

(beat)

why are you here right now?

DUTCH

I don't know. It just feels right for me to be here. For me to try to make things right. I'm not sure. I'm not really sure,

LAUREN

I know what it is... You're just trying to save your ass. Trying to make sure that people outside of your boys don't see the real you. Putting up a goddamned front out here so that when I go talk to people about what happened, I can say that at least you tried. I don't matter to you, and you've made that quite clear. I never did. That's why I left. You said I was everything, but treated me like nothing. You're an asshole, Dutch. A fucking asshole, and I hate you for disrespecting me, for hurting me, for LYING to me. For abandoning me

DUTCH

Lying to you? I never lied to you.

LAUREN

So who was the girl? Do you consider keeping someone in the dark to not be lying? Because I sure as hell do.

DUTCH

No. It's not lying. You never asked me if I had cheated, so I didn't tell you. It was one kiss, and one kiss only, and after that, I stopped, because I realized how wrong it was. I never gave you reason to question me. I never gave you reason to question the shit that I was on. And yeah, I know that I fucked up, but after I did, I tried to make it up to you.

LAUREN

How can you make something up to someone if they don't know what you're doing? (beat) You cant.

DUTCH

I tried to give you everything.

LAUREN

And you stopped. And now all you do is bash on me. Hate on me. Make fun of me. You forget that I'm a person, too. You forget that I have feelings. You forget that we had something.

DUTCH

And you threw that away

LAUREN

And now I'm trying to make up for it.

DUTCH

Right. Right. Trying to make up for it. Not because you really want to, but because you feel lonely. Because that nigga ditched you, just like I told you he would. Is that why you're trying to make up for it?

LAUREN

No. I'm trying because I really miss you. I really, really miss you, but you keep disappointing me. You keep yelling at me, and making me feel like shit, and to see this now, your boys, getting on me at Harold's—I'm starting to see you for the two faced bastard that you are. And for you to not tell me about whoever this girl was, to lie to me, to sleep with me, to kiss me, to have me feel comfortable with you —yeah. You're bad for me. I cant stand you. I hate you. I hate you for blaming me for everything, and here you are, lying to me about making the same mistakes that I made. You just covered them up a lot better. You are a horrible person, and I deserve better

DUTCH

I'm a horrible person? I *kissed* someone! You *fucked* someone. You fucked, I kissed, and here we are. The difference between us is that you continued with him for a long time, and you used it to torture me. You held it over my head. I finally got some damn sense to get away from you—realized how much you were enjoying fucking with me, and having your slices of cake.

LAUREN

Fuck you.

(beat)

(beat)

I broke. I'm sorry, I broke. And I'm sorry to have disappointed you, oh great one. You are the perfect guy. The perfect boyfriend. And you've made no mistakes. You've been oh so supportive, and oh so kind. You've done nothing to make me feel bad. You've been the most incredible person over however long it's been. I'm glad that you are here to support me and to be understanding. I'm sorry for being weak. I know you tried you hardest, and I didn't. I'm sorry that I couldn't do that. I was just at a place where I wasn't me, but you've been you—honest—you've been honest this whole time. You've done nothing wrong, and I'm sure that I did

something to make you kiss that girl. That was my fault. That was all my fault. This is all my fault.

DUTCH

No. It's not your fault

LAUREN

Yes, it is. Let me take the blame for it. Let me be the one who takes the load, since you've carried the weight of this for so long. I'll do my work now. I'll work harder.

DUTCH

(beat)

I don't know if you're supposed to work anymore. I'm not working at it anymore. I'm building something with someone else now

LAUREN

Well I'll keep building just in case. Just in case. Just in case you realize that I'm important to you. You're probably in some state of denial. You're probably in some state where you just want to test me.

DUTCH

I'm not testing you. I've moved on.

LAUREN

Have you really? Because I don't believe it. There you are, sitting next to me. Arguing with me about us

DUTCH

I'm scarred. And I'm trying to heal. Stephanie is taking care of me. She is doing what you couldn't, and what you wouldn't. She is being something that you never could be.

LAUREN

Oh... Well... Well.. Right...

DUTCH

I... just... fuck... fuck this... fuck you... why do you always show up when I need you to show up the least?

LAUREN

I just show up when it feels right for me to show up...

DUTCH

What about when it's right for me? What about what's right for me? That doesn't matter to you?!

LAUREN

(quietly) it does. It does matter...

DUTCH

Sure it does. Sure it does. Right.

(Lauren's ride arrives at the bus stop. It is one of her friends. The car waits while they finish the conversation.)

LAUREN

I need to do me, Dutch. And I need you to help me do that. I need you to be supportive of me.

DUTCH

And I need you the fuck out of my life.

LAUREN

... why? That doesn't make sense to me...

DUTCH

Don't call me anymore

LAUREN

Fine. That's it.

(Lauren gets up to go get in the car)

DUTCH

What? No fight? No argument? That's it? (beat) Show's how much you care.

LAUREN

Whatever...

DUTCH

Are you still with him?

LAUREN

(beat) That's none of your business

DUTCH

What do you mean that's not my business?

LAUREN

You hurt me. You left me alone. (beat) Im still with him because you continue to hurt\ me. (beat) I'm sorry.

(Lauren gets in the car, and it speeds off. Dutch sits at the bus stop for a few seconds. Then pulls out his phone. He dials Carv)

DUTCH

Yo, Carv... Ya'll niggas done...? Aight, cool. Who am I giving a ride to...? Just you...? What about Frankie...? Aight... that's right, O and Frankie did have some shit to talk about... Aight, meet me in the lot, sir... I'll be over there in like 30 seconds.

(Hangs up the phone. Then he dials Lauren. Her phone is off. It goes straight to voicemail)

DUTCH

Lauren, I'm sorry. Call me. Let's talk. I'm sorry. Peace.

(Dutch hangs up and calls Stephanie afterwards)

DUTCH

Steph...How are you, baby...? Good, good... Yeah, I'm just chillin' with the fellas at Harold's... Them niggas causin' trouble.... *(Dutch gets up to walk back to Harold's)*. Anyways, I just wanted to call you to tell you that I miss you and love you and that I was thinking about you a lot today...

END SCENE

SCENE 5—Thieves in the Night

DUTCH is in his car with CARV. His car is really, really, really messy. There are clothes all over the back seat, papers everywhere, bottles and cans, too. He is driving very fast along his favorite road in the city. He has driven up and down Lake Shore Drive many nights after having lots of stress or being depressed. Driving down Lake Shore Drive is very therapeutic for him. On this ride, he is listening to Black Star's "Thieves in the Night." He sings the whole song, using traces. Parts he sings are underlined. Dutch's window is open. CARV looks out the window in thought. THE SONG WILL COME IN AT SOME POINT DURING THE DIALOGUE. THE DIALOGUE DOESN'T TAKE UP THE WHOLE SCENE, SO DUTCH WILL SING A LOT OF IT. HE'S FREE TO SAY THE LINES DURING CARV'S PARTS, TOO.

CARV

So what happened, bruh? You rushed out

DUTCH

Naw, man. It's all good. Just some shit with Lauren. (beat) Yall niggas cant clown her like that. Yall cant.

CARV

It's all in fun. All of it. You know that shit.

DUTCH

I know it, but she doesn't, and so she gets pissed off at me.

CARV

What do you care if she gets pissed off at you for? You aint with her no more, so it don't matter, right?

DUTCH

True, but it still matters. It matters because she's peoples, regardless of whatever she did. She's peoples, and yeah. Cant do peoples dirty.

CARV

I feel you. (beat) At least Frankie aint say nothin'. At least he aint clown on nobody. He was trynta hold you down.

(beat)

DUTCH

Why does this shit have me so fucked up?

CARV

It's cuz you don't think with your dick, man. That's what you need to start doin! Start fuckin' with a lot of folks. That's what I do, and you don't see me get caught up with no hos, man.

DUTCH

You think with your dick cuz it's smarter than your brain, nigga. You know I aint like that. You know I aint never been like that.

CARV

Look. You want me to be real? Imma be real with you. Get the fuck away from it, now. You don't get away from it, you aint gon have no fun, nigga. Fuck her. In fact, fuck her. Like, literally. Get you some pussy, move on to the next two or three of em.

DUTCH

That's not right, man

CARV

Neither is the shit you in, man. Go... Have.. fun... And forget about Lauren.

DUTCH

What about Stephanie?

CARV

(laughs) my bad. Yeah, I forgot about her. What she don't know wont hurt her. (beat) (realizes that really bothers Dutch) Aight, aight. Lemme rephrase that. She's good for you, right? (beat) You happy with her, right? (beat) Then enjoy that shit.

"Give me the fortune, keep the fame," said my man Louis/ I agreed, know what he mean because we live the truest lie/ I asked him why we follow the law of the bluest eye/ He looked at me, he thought about it/ Was like, "I'm clueless, why?"/ The question was rhetorical, the answer is horrible/ Our morals are out of place and got our lives full of sorrow/ And so tomorrow comin later than usual/ Waitin' on someone to pity us/ While we findin beauty in the hideous/ They say money's the root of all evil but I can't tell/ YouknowwhatImean, pesos, francs, yens, cowrie shells,

dollar bills/ Or is it the mindstate that's ill?/ Creating crime rates to fill the new prisons they build/ Over money and religion there's more blood to spill/ The wounds of slaves in cotton fields that never heal/ What's the deal?/ A lot of cats who buy records are straight broke/ But my language universal they be recitin my quotes/ While R&B singers hit bad notes, we rock the boat/
of thought, that my man Louis' statements just provoked/ Caught up, in conversations of our personal worth/Brought up, through endangered species status on the planet Earth/ Survival tactics means, bustin gats to prove you hard/ Your firearms are too short to box with God/ Without faith, all of that is illusionary /Raise my son, no vindication of manhood necessary/ **Chorus** Not strong/ Only aggressive/ Not free/ We only licensed/ Not compassionate, only polite/ Now who the nicest?/ Not good but well behaved/ Chasin after death/ so we can call ourselves brave?/ Still livin like mental slaves/ Hidin like thieves in the night from life/ Illusions of oasis makin you look twice/ Hidin like thieves in the night from life/ Illusions of oasis makin you look twice/ **Verse** Yo, I'm sure that everbody out listenin agree/ That everything you see ain't really how it be/
A lot of jokers out runnin in place, chasin the style/ Be a lot goin on beneath the empty smile/ Most cats in my area be lovin the hysteria/ Synthesized surface conceals the interior/ America, land of opportunity, mirages and camouflages/ More than usually -- speakin loudly, sayin nothing/ You confusin me, you losin me/ Your game is twisted, want me enlisted -- in your usary/ Foolishly, most men join the ranks cluelessly / Buffoonishly accept the deception, believe the perception/ Reflection rarely seen across the surface of the lookin glass/ Walkin the street, wonderin who they be lookin past/ Lookin gassed with them imported designer shades on/ Stars shine bright, but the light -- rarely stays on/ Same song, just remixed, different arrangement/ Put you on a yacht but they won't call it a slaveship/ Strangeness, you don't control this, you barely hold this/ Screamin brand new, when they just sanitized the old shit/ Suppose it's, just another clever Jedi mind trick/ That they been runnin across stars through all the time with/ I find it's distressin, there's never no in-between/ We either niggaz or Kings/ We either bitches or Queens/ The deadly ritual seems immersed, in the perverse/ Full of short attention spans, short tempers, and short skirts/ Long barrel automatics released in short bursts/ The length of black life is treated with short worth/ Get yours first, them other niggaz secondary/ That type of illin that be fillin up the cemetery/ This life is temporary but the soul is eternal/ Separate the real from the lie, let me learn you/ Not strong, only aggressive, cause the power ain't directed/ That's why, we are subjected to the will of the oppressive/ Not free, we only licensed/ Not live, we just exciting/ Cause the captors.. own the masters.. to what we writin/ Not compassionate, only polite, we well trained/ Our sincerity's rehearsed in stage, it's just a game/ Not good, but well behaved cause the ca-me-ra survey/most of the things that we think, do, or say/ We chasin after death just to call ourselves brave/ But everyday, next man meet with the grave/ I give a damn if any fan recall my legacy/ I'm tryin to live life in the sight of God's memory/ Like that y'all/ A lot of people don't understand the true criteria of things/ Can't just accept the appearance/ Have to get the true essence/ They ain't lookin around/ **Chorus** Not strong/ Only aggressive/ Not free/ We only licensed/ Not compassionate, only polite/ Now who the nicest?/ Not good but well behaved/ Chasin after death/ so we can call ourselves brave?/ Still livin like mental slaves/ Hidin like thieves in the night from life/ Illusions of oasis makin you look twice/ Hidin like thieves in the night from life/ Illusions of oasis makin you look twice/ Hidin like thieves in the night from life/ Illusions of oasis makin you look twice/ Hidin like thieves in the night from life/Illusions of oasis makin you look twice/ (to be sung) Stop hidin, stop hidin, stop hidin yo' face/ Stop hidin,

stop hidin, cause ain't no hidin place/ Stop hidin, stop hidin, stop hidin yo' face/ Stop hidin, stop hidin, cause ain't no hidin place/ Said it aint no hidin place/ Said it aint no hidin place/ Said it aint no hidin place/ Said it aint no hidin place/ We take the black star line, right on home...

Lights Fade
END SCENE