

**POETIC JUSTICE**

by

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY**

COLUMBIA TITLE CARD:

"ONCE UPON A TTME IN SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES"

We hear voices: one male, the other female. From the tone of their speech and the accompanying music, we can tell we are entering a romantic scene.

FADE IN:

INT. FANCY NEW YORK APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Where we see a romantic scene played out between a man and a woman. Both are white. The couple have just finished a candlelit dinner.

BRAD

You like your wine? Want s'more?

She nods her approval.

PENELOPE

Mmmmm you're good. Candles, dinner,  
wine. What's next?

He grins.

BRAD

Let me set the mood.

He goes over to the stereo to turn it on. The Isley Brothers "Between the Sheets" emanates from the speakers. Brad crosses to the couch and into a position in which to kiss Penelope. He does, and the sound of "Between the Sheets" is invaded by the remix of A Tribe Called Quest's "Bonita Applebum."

EXT. COMPTON DRIVE-IN THEATER - DUSK - SFX

Two lines of cars wait to enter the drive-in. The heavy bass sounds of hip-hop music mingle in the air with that of the many window speakers that plag the movie. In the background we can see the couple in the previous scene kissing on a large movie screen. An LAPD helicopter flies overhead, transcending us into the next shot. Welcome back to South Central Los Angeles.

INT. COMPTON DRIVE-IN THEATER - DUSK - SFX

Overhead we see a shaft of Light coming from the drive-in's projector. As we move past a few cars, their inhabitants are all in various threes of sexual foreplay. Some are kissing; others are actually making love. All the windows are steamed up. We hear the voices of the females as the men grunt, groan, moan, and beg over their bodies. Love is in the air.

CAR #1

Don't bite me so hard! You gotta be more gentle.

CAR #2

(softly)

Use your tongue. Just use your tongue.

CAR #3

(with heated passion)

Ohhhh! Oh, yes, ohhh! Oww! I'm sticking to the seat.

We come to the last car, whose windows are crystal clear. Things are just beginning to heat up between the couple inside the car. The woman is an "around the way" honey with soft brown skin, full brown eyes, and nice delicious full lips. This is Justice, who at seventeen is still looking for her place in the world. The lucky man kissing her is her boyfriend, Markell, a small-time drug dealer and former gangsta. Justice reluctantly accepts his advances, but she ain't having it. There is a window speaker, from which the sound of the movie Alters into the car.

MARKELL

C'mon, let's get in the back seat.

JUSTICE

No, Markell, why can't we just watch the movie?

MARKELL

'Cause it's boring.

He goes to kiss her again. This time, it's a nice, long, juicy powerhouse kiss that causes the Richter scale to jump two points. Justice appears obviously affected. She asks the inevitable question.

JUSTICE

Markell, do you love me?

MARKELL

Of course I love you.

JUSTICE

Why? Tell me why you love me.

MARKELL

(looks around)

Now?

JUSTICE

Yeah, right now.

There is a pause. He thinks.

MARKELL  
Okay, I love you because you too  
fine.

JUSTICE  
Is that it?

MARKELL  
Yeah.

Justice looks dissatisfied.

MARKELL  
Can I have some sugar? Some butter?  
Some sweets?

JUSTICE  
No, not yet. Get me some popcorn.

Markell 's face drops.

JUSTICE  
Pleazzze?!

Markell relents and gets out of the car. He takes two steps,  
turns on a heel, and leans into the car again.

MARKELL  
Hey, Justice! I was just thinking. I  
also love you 'cause when I was in  
tha county jail, you wrote me a lotta  
sweet poems.

Justice grins. Markell smiles and blows her a kiss good-bye.

INT.COMPTON DRIVE-IN CONCESSION STAND - NIGHT

There are only a few customers in line; all are Black or  
Hispanic. Markell gets in line, and time slows down. We notice  
the abruptness of the popcorn popping like gunshots, the  
sound and motion of the gurgling Orange Bang machine, and  
two thugs who stand in the corner talking to each other.  
Markell seems noticeably nervous at their presence.

THE COUNTER

Where Markell finally arrives at the front of the line.

THE CORNER

Where one of the two thugs looks across the room at Markell.  
For a moment it looks as though he recognizes Markell. He  
turns back to continue to talk with his friend.

A fight breaks out in another corner, and everyone's attention is drawn in that direction.

BACK TO COUNTER

Markell completes his transaction amidst the mayhem and walks away popcorn in hand. In the corner, the thug looks back toward the counter. On his face we see he now recalls where he has seen Markell before.

INT. / EXT. COMPTON DRIVE-IN - THE CAR - NIGHT

Markell comes back to the car, glancing behind his back every so often.

MARKELL  
 (looking over his  
 left shoulder)  
 I think I saw these fools that Pete  
 and I got beef with.

Markell turns to notice that Justice is not in the passenger seat. Justice leans up from the back seat to kiss his cheek and tenderly run her fingers around Markell's neck and shoulder. We notice her long fingernails. Markell laughs and places the popcorn on the dashboard. Our attention is drawn to the passenger window, where the drive-in speaker hangs. Romantic movie music flows into the car. On the driver's side the window is open. Suddenly, a pistol is placed next to Markell's head. Time slows down. The gun is fired. Justice screams. The popcorn scatters, and the passenger window breaks from the traveling bullet. Time resumes. Justice's screams turn to a whimper. There is blood on her hands. The drive-in speaker has now fallen on the passenger seat. We hear the romantic movie playing in the background.

OVERHEAD

AS WE PULL UP and away from the car. There are people running and screaming in every direction, and cars are leaving. These sounds overlap into:

TITLE CARD:

"POETIC JUSTICE"

The sun rises behind the logo.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. INGLEWOOD CEMETERY - DAY

Where we come out of the leaves of a tree to see a garden of stones, concrete symbols of souls long past. There is one lone figure standing before a grave.

We recognize this person as Justice. We also hear Justice speak in voice over. Over the following images she recites the first of many poems that move this story forward.

BURN IN: "TWO YEARS LATER"

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Alone. Lying, thinking. Last night.  
How to find my soul a home. Where  
water is not thirsty. And bread loaf  
is not stone. I came up with one  
thing. And I don't believe I'm wrong.  
That nobody. But nobody can make it  
out here alone."

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PACIFIC BEAUTY COLLEGE - DAY

We move past many women. Ah of them are dressed in white smocks and are standing over the heads of other women who are seated in reclining beauty chairs. We hear the instructor giving a lesson in hair coloring. We end on Justice listening attentively and primping the hair of the woman in her chair.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Alone, all alone. Nobody, but nobody.  
Can make it out here alone. There  
are some millionaires with money  
they can't use. Their wives run round  
like banshees. Their children sing  
the blues."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Where Justice puts some model heads into the trunk of her car.

EXT. CRENSHAW BOULEVARE - DAY

We see a "CRENSHAW" Sign up close go past the frame, left to right.

MONTAGE OF IMAGES

We see various images of life in the Crenshaw district of South Central Los Angeles. Some are static; others are hand-held traveling shots, docu style.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

There are images of people protesting a Korean liquor store, some protestors flash signs that read: "BLACK / RECYCLE BLACK WLLARS"

EXT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

We see a Cop come out with donuts and coffee for himself and his partner.

EXT. LEMERT PARK - DAY

A group of young men are curbside being interrogated by the LILPD. Nearby a brother with a video camera begins to record. He is chased away by the police. In between some of these images, we SUPERIMPOSE the heads of some women being done. Over these images we continue to hear Justice's voice reading poetry. She is driving to work.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"They've got expensive doctors, to  
cure their hearts of stone. But  
nobody. No nobody. Can make it out  
here alone. Alone, all alone. Nobody,  
but nobody. Can make it out here  
alone. Now if you listen closely,  
I'll tell you what I know. Storm  
clouds are gathering, the wind is  
gonna blow. The race of man is  
suffering, and I can hear the moan.  
Cause nobody. But nobody. Can make  
it out here alone."

We see Justice's car pull to the curb. It is a 1992 Honda Accord, complete with nice rims and tinted windows. The license plate reads "2 FUNKY".

INT. JUSTICE'S CAR - DAY

JUSTICE'S NOTEBOOK

Where we see Justice write the last stanza of the poem.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Alone, all alone. Nobody, but nobody.  
Can make it out here alone."

She closes her notebook. The cover reads "NOTES OF A POETIC JUSTICE".

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Where Justice exits her car. She uses her automatic lock system, which sounds of "armed" when it locks.

As she walks up the street, we see the same brothers established in the previous montage on their knees, with their hands behind their heads. Justice walks past them without acknowledging their condition.

INT. JESSIE'S BEAUTY SALON AND SUPPLY - DAY

Hair, nails, curlers, and combs. A woman picks up a phone and says, "Jessie's Beauty Salon and Supply." We have invaded this place on Friday, the busiest day of the week. We see many women of various ages, shapes, and sizes receiving hair care from different stylists. No two heads are the same. Our attention and ears are drawn to the loud voice of one young woman who sits on the waiting couch flipping through a Black hair magazine. She has short-cut hair and eyes, nails, and temper of a Siamese cat. This is Iesha.

She is talking to Heywood, who is a spiritual person. He is so cosmic that his sexuality is often questioned. Nearby at another booth is Dexter, another male stylist who is very straight. His dick has guided him into the world of cosmetology.

HEYWOOD

(over images of nails,  
hair, etc.)

I know whatcha mean. I don't understand some of these women. I don't see how they can allow themselves to be so disrespected! My body is my temple! And a temple should never be defiled. Especially not in this case. I love myself.

Dexter shakes his head in shame at Heywood. He is massaging the head of one fine-ass sistah. She smiles. Dexter suavely bends down and says, "You like that don 't cha." She nods in approval.

IESHA

Yeah, well, he just did my girl all wrong. She's as 'fraid as a cat. Got her going around wearing sunglasses, and you know how she like braggin about her pretty green eyes. So you know what's up with that. Top it off, she still in love with the nigga.

Justice walks in.

JUSTICE

You telling everybody's business.

IESHA

Yeah, I'd tell your business too if  
you had somethin to tell.

JUSTICE

You ready?

Iesha nods a yes.

JUSTICE

You got your hair?

Iesha holds up a bag of synthetic hair. Justice walks toward her station, saying "Hello" to the other stylists on the fly.

INT. THE BABYROOM - DAY

Where we notice a large playpen with four babies. All are dressed in Baby Guess, Air Jordans, and Fila. One baby plays with a beeper that goes off as he puts it in his mouth. This is the Baby Room, where the women leave their children when they get their hair done. Start this shot off with a fine-ass sistah with a baby in hand walking over to the crib.

THE DOORWAY

Where we see a little boy about twelve years old standing in the middle of these children. This is Baha, the errand boy of the shop. Baba sits playing a Sega Game Gear, looking up from time to time out the window and at the fine women that pass by. Some of the older children attempt to distract him from his game.

BAHA

Stop! Quit!  
(looking out the  
window, then goes to  
the doorway)  
Here she comes!

THE SALON

Where all the stylists and customers turn. They know what that means.

EXT. JESSLE'S SALON - DAY

We see a hand with keys in the frame. The owner of these keys presses a button, which turns on the car alarm. The license on her car reads "Ms. BOOTE". At leg level we swing around to walk toward the salon. In front of the door stands a Panhandler with a sign in hand.

PANHANDLER

Good morning, Jessie. Could you spare some change?!

JESSIE (O.S.)

Hell, naw! And get your dirty, smelly, unemployed ass out from in front of my shop.

We move past the Panhandler and toward the front door of the shop.

INT. JESSIE'S SALON - DAY - BACK TO DOORWAY

Where we see Jessie open her Fendi purse to send Baha on an errand. Since we are at chair level, we notice her shapely bottom half. She got much ass! IDEA start on her purse being opened, then PAN over to Baha as we hear Jessie offscreen.

JESSIE (O.S.)

Baha, do me a favor, baby, and go to the liquor store get me a Honey Bun and a pack of -

BAHA

(taking the money)  
Big Red. Yeah, I know.

WIDER

As we see Baha take off for the store and Jessie turned around calling to him.

JESSIE

And bring me back my change!

She turns back around, and we see her face. Jessie is the owner of this shop. She is the queen of the hootchies in the hood. Her attire puts the E in ethnic, as she is wearing the hottest, most expensive outfit that can be bought at the Fox Hills Mall. She takes off her sunglasses, and we can see her face.

JESSIE

(in a good mood)  
Good morning, everybody.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Jessie walks across the room and to the corner. All the women in the shop are looking at her funny.

JESSIE

(sweetly)  
What?! What?

JESSIE

(vicious)

What y'all looking at? I know I'm  
Ane, but damn! Get back to work.

THE SALON

Where everybody goes about their business.

CONTINUED THE SINK

Iesha's head is in the sink. Justice is shampooing and conditioning her hair. Iesha's eyes are closed to keep the suds from stinging them.

JUSTICE

Just let that conditioning sit for  
five minutes.

IESHA

Where you going? You not gonna talk  
to me?

JUSTICE

No, I wanna go over here and talk to  
Jessie. It's a fivehour job anyway -  
you might as well just chill.

Justice walks away.

IESHA

All right, then, just play me like a  
biscuit. Hair all wet, cold.

THE COUNTER

Where Justice joins Jessie, who is busy checking the receipts  
of the morning.

JUSTICE

So.

JESSIE

Yeah.

They both start laughing. A Delivery Man arrives with boxes  
of shampoo. A few sistahs throw him an in terested eye. Jessie  
is checking him out also,

JUSTICE

So he's out, huh? Y'all got buckwild  
last night? Where'd y'all go?

JESSIE

Could you put 'em over there?

JESSIE  
 Snooty Fox Motor Inn.  
 (to the stylists)  
 Y'all make sure to fill out them  
 receipts!

JUSTICE  
 (laughing)  
 They still got them red walls?

JESSIE  
 Yep, mirrors on the ceiling. Same  
 ole, same o'. They been filling out  
 them receipts?

JUSTICE  
 Yeah.

JESSIE  
 What you know about mirrors on the  
 ceiling? When the last time you been  
 there?

JUSTICE  
 Snooty Fox? Don't remember.

INT. JESSIE'S BEAUTY SALON - DAY - DOORWAY

Where we see a brother, Rodney, come in with this woman.

RODNEY  
 Hey, my girl need her hair and nails  
 done.

JESSIE  
 She got an appointment?

RODNEY  
 Naw.

HEYWOOD (O.S.)  
 She ain't got no hair, either!

Some people laugh. We see the Woman. She got about as much  
 hair as a Snap.

JESSIE  
 Make an appointment.  
 (lights a smoke,  
 touches Justice's  
 hat)  
 Why you keep wearing these hats?  
 What you hidin?! Ooow, keep it on.

JUSTICE  
 (pulling her hat on)  
 Stop.

JESSIE  
 You need to let me do somethin to  
 that head of yours. Man, I'm tired.  
 Got a poem for me today? Lord knows  
 I need one.

JUSTICE  
 I left my notebook in the car. I'll  
 get it in a bit.

JESSIE  
 When you gonna get a man? Asking all  
 these questions about mine. You still  
 in mourning? Sportin black, don't  
 make time to do your own hair. Lookin  
 tore up from tha floor up. You can  
 always tell when a woman ain't givin  
 up no coochie.

JUSTICE  
 I like black. Besides, I don't have  
 no time for no man right now.

JESSIE  
 See, your problem is you make bad  
 choices in men. You don't know how  
 to pick 'em.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Where we come down out of the sky to see a small U.S. Postal  
 Mail jeep turn in the street and come to the curb. We hear  
 the heavy bass beat of hip-hop coming from the jeep.

JUSTICE (O.S.)  
 Look who's talking.

INT. POSTAL JEEP - DAY

Inside the jeep a hand presses the stop/eject on the recorder  
 and flips the tape.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - THE GROUND

Where the jeep door opens and a pair of sharp Nikes come  
 out. We travel up to reveal the face of a young Black brother,  
 twenty-two years, well built, rough looking, a close fade  
 under a cap that reads "U.S. MAIL".

This is Lucky. Not your everyday postman, but just another hard-working young South Central brother trying to make that hard-to-come-by daily dollar.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Lucky gets his bag and walks toward the salon entrance.

PANHANDLER

(singing)

Hey, hey wait a minute, Mr. Postman!  
Mr. Postman, got some spare change?

LUCKY

Naw, muthafucka, but I gotta spare stamp so you can mail your ass a job application!

CUT TO:

INT. JESSIE'S SALON - DAY

Where Lucky enters. His eyes take in the sight of all these fine, beautiful sistahs. This is his favorite part of his route. One or two women pass in front of him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Lucky makes his way to the counter, where he gives the mail to Justice, who is organizing the outgoing mail. Jessie sits nearby.

LUCKY

Y'all didn't get nothing but bills.

Lucky looks at Justice, trying to make eye contact, which she skillfully avoids.

JUSTICE'S POV

Lucky's hands pull out mail and place it on the counter. 36, 48, f.p.s. Justice is licking stamps and placing them on outgoing envelopes. Lucky notices her sexy tongue.

LUCKY

Why you always looking so mad? You  
too fine to be looking so angry...  
You must ain't got no boyfriend 'cause  
you always angry!

Justice finally looks up. Blank eyes. Blank face. No interest whatsoever. Then her face breaks out into a mischievous smile. She looks Lucky up and down, checkin him out.

JUSTICE  
 (with attitude)  
 What do you want? What do you want  
 from me?

LUCKY  
 Well, I think you kinda fly. We could  
 start with your number.

JUSTICE  
 Come here.

Lucky looks around.

JUSTICE  
 (sexy)  
 Come closer. I want to whisper  
 somethin to you.

Lucky leans in closer.

JUSTICE  
 (coolly)  
 Let's cut to the chase. What do you  
 reeaally want?... You wanna smell my  
 poonani?

Lucky is taken aback. Surprised.

LUCKY  
 ... Uhh, yeah Here?

JUSTICE  
 Wait a minute, baby.  
 (turns to Jessie,  
 loud)  
 Jessie! He said he wanna smell my  
 poonani!

JESSIE  
 (coolly, smoking)  
 Really.

JUSTICE  
 Yeah. Should I let him smell it?

JESSIE  
 Yeah.

Jessie coolly walks from behind the counter and comes face  
 to face with Lucky. She leans in close to his face and blows  
 air into his face. Lucky is surprised. Justice and Jessie  
 start laughing. Justice hands Lucky the outgoing mail and  
 walks across the shop to attend to Iesha's hair. She laughs  
 her ass off.

Lucky coolly closes his mailbag and walks out of the salon. Jessie looks at his exit and then in Justice's direction. She just smiles in amusement and puts out her cigarette. Same ole, same o'.

EXT. JESSIE'S SALON - DAY

Lucky exits the salon, retaining his cool despite being dissed.

LUCKY  
(under his breath,  
looking back)  
Crazy Black bitches.

The Panhandler comes nearby. Lucky reaches into his pocket and gives him a quarter.

LUCKY  
And don't smoke it. Here, take a  
stamp too.

He hops into the jeep and drives off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SOUTH CENTRAL POST OFFICE - CENTURY BOULEVARD - DAY

TIME CLOCK CLOSE

A second hand flows past the frame. The minute hand is steady. The hour hand clicks to 4:30 P.M. A time card is placed in. Someone is checking out.

THE HALLWAY

Where we see Lucky is the one checking out.

WE PUSH IN to him as he takes his card out and places it in a slot on the wall. He then goes in his pocket to pull out an envelope.

THE ENVELOPE

As it is opened, we can barely see that it is a paycheck.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Lucky notices the amount of the check. He looks frustrated. Off screen We hear the clock tick once more. Lucky looks around to see if anyone is watching. Then he hits the clock, breaking the glass.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - A DUFFEL BAG

Being stuffed with a postal uniform. A hand pulls out a baseball cap.

EXT. BATHROOM - DAY

Where Lucky emerges in more comfortable clothing. As he walks up the hall and into...

INT. THA SORTIN ROOM - DAY

We start on a large CLOSEUP of George Bush's face. Suddenly, it is hit with many darts. Maybe a shot on dart POV, as in Robin Hood.

WIDER

Where we see that we are in a Sorting Room. This is the place where mail is sorted by ZIP code. There are eight guys at work. Three are brothers; the other five are Hispanic. Chicago and a Mexican dude, E.J., are playing darts.

CHICAGO

You see that? I tore that muthafucka's nose up!

E.J. goes up to the dartboard, to which they have taped a picture of George Bush.

E.J.

Yeah that was nice!

Lucky comes into the room.

LUCKY

Y'all need to get y'all asses to work before y'all get Ared!

CHICAGO & E.J.

Fuck you.

LUCKY

(gestures to Chicago)  
What up, souljah?

Chicago walks toward Lucky. E.J. looks a little left out.

CHICAGO

What's up? Hey you know they put two more Buddha heads on mail carrier. Still got me waiting, sorting with tha Mexicans.

We see E.J. in the close background nearby, sorting mail with an open ear.

E.J.  
Hey, Chicago, don't be talking bout  
Mexicans! I kick your ass. At least  
we got a country.

CHICAGO  
(whispers)  
I'm on Oaktown Run tomorrow. Getting  
a truck ready. Wanna go?

LUCKY  
Yeah.

E.J.  
Y'all going to Oakland?

Lucky cuts him a dry look that reads "Mind your own business."

CHICAGO  
Cool. You gonna bring a yamp?

E.J.  
(now in the middle)  
What's a yamp?

LUCKY  
A young tramp. You mind?

E.J. calls Lucky a "Puto" and goes back to sorting mail.  
Lucky and Chicago walk away and talk.

LUCKY (O.S.)  
And get them ZIP codes right.

ANOTHER ANGLE - MOVING

LUCKY  
I dunno. Why don't you get that crazy  
ho' you go wit to hook me up?

CHICAGO  
I'm on it. You call your cousin K-  
Dog?

LUCKY  
Naw, not yet. I hadda And a way up  
there this weekend anyway.  
(with pride)  
Gotta work on our music thang. It's  
cool, we gettin' paid to go. Gotta  
go, Loc.

Lucky goes to leave.

CHICAGO  
Where you goin?

Lucky turns.

LUCKY  
Why you need to know? You ain't my  
bitch! I'm off!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THA PROJECTS - DAY WIDE

As Lucky comes to the curb and gets ready to exit his car. In the far background, we see and hear another car coming up.

GANGSTA RIDE - DAY

From the inside of the car, we roll up on Lucky getting out of his car. WE get the feeling something drastic is gonna happen. 36, 48, f.p.s. Time slows down. Lucky turns around just as the car stops.

ANGLE ON LUCKY

As he turns and attempts to see who is in the car. It turns out to be some of his old friends.

LLOYD  
What's up, Lucky?

LUCKY  
What up, nigga? What y'all doing?

LLOYD  
Looking for a nigga to jack.

In his lap we see a gun.

LUCKY  
Ya'll need to jack that cracka Larryl  
Gates.

BACKSEAT GANGSTA  
Who's that?

Everybody just turns and looks at him. Ne shrinks back into the back seat.

LLOYD  
Yeah we gonna jack him too. Goin up  
to City Hall later today... Remember  
Lerek?

LUCKY  
Yeah. He live over there.  
(points)

LLOYD  
Not no more. Got his ass caped out  
yesterday... We gonna get tha niggas  
that got him.

Lucky nods.

LUCKY  
Well, later.

LLOYD  
All right. Peace.

Lloyd smiles ironically.

LUCKY  
Yeah, peace.

They drive off. Lucky turns and walks into the projects.

EXT. J-BONE'S PORCH - DAY

Lucky walks up to a porch where we see a tall, slender, light-brown brother wearing no shirt and smoking a joint. This is J-Bone, Lucky's old friend. So close are they that they have children by the same woman. J-Bone is standing on his porch enjoying the afternoon sun and a cool Santa Ana breeze. We hear a jet fly overhead. We hear a fly-ass beat flowing from someone's apartment window.

J-BONE  
(greeting)  
Mr. Postman! Working muthafucka!

LUCKY  
Don't start! Whatsup, J-Bone.

J-BONE  
Want some Thai bud?

LUCKY  
Naw. Can't fuck wit that.

They pause for a moment. J-Bone's attention has wandered across the way.

## ACROSS THE WAY

We see an Old Woman toiling in her garden. In the projects older folk respect their small spaces by making them as comfortable as possible. Some playing children run through this shot.

## BACK TO PORCH

J-BONE

Hi, Ms. Jackson... She hate my ass.

## MS. JACKSON

Looks up toward J-Bone. Her face does not register the slightest hint of a positive response to J-Bone's greeting. In fact it says, "Go to hell." Ms. Jackson tells one of the kids, a young boy, to go inside. Upset and reluctant, the boy complies with his grandmother's wishes.

## THE PORCH

LUCKY

Heard 'bout Derek.

J-BONE

Yeah, Derek. D-Dog! Crazy muthafucka, huh? Ain't that about a bitch?

(reminiscing)

... Anyway, so you here to check on Keisha, huh?

They start walking.

LUCKY

Yeah, I'm a give Angel some money to buy her some clothes.

J-BONE

Awww, muthafucka, you don't need to do that. I'll get her some clothes. Take her to the Slauson Swap Meet, Fox Hills Mall, get her what ever she need.

LUCKY

Naw, you don't need to do that.

A crack addict walks toward J-Bone. He makes a quick transaction.

J-BONE

Ain't no thang... It ain't like I ain't got the money. Besides, she call me Daddy sometimes anyway.

J-Bone walks on ahead. Lucky seems a little miffed. They walk upstairs to Angel's apartment.

INT. ANGEL'S PLACE - DAY

Where Lucky and J-Bone enter. There are two small children on the floor watching television. One is a girl, the other a boy. The girl is six years old, and the boy is four. This is Keisha and Antonio. On the screen are afternoon cartoons.

LUCKY

What you mean she call you Daddy?

J-BONE

Just what I said.

LUCKY

(gestures to his child)

Hey, little girl!

Keisha runs up into her daddy's arms.

LUCKY

Who's your daddy?

Keisha timidly points to Lucky, who smiles and looks at J-Bone.

LUCKY

That's your son, this my daughter.  
Don't you be forgetting.

J-BONE

Well, I'm her second daddy, since  
they came from the same hooka.

As if on cue and "on cue" we see a young woman of about twenty-two enter the room. Her face looks like that of someone who is entering the threes of what will be a hard life. Despite this, she retains a beautiful but very uninnocent look. This is Angel.

ANGEL

What y'all two fools talking 'bout?

LUCKY

Talking 'bout your yamp ass.  
(takes a drink, then  
takes a second look  
at her)

We notice the unusual color of her lipstick and her nervous twitching. Angel begins rearranging things on her already-cluttered-up coffee table.

LUCKY

What you cleaning up for? Place look  
fucked up! Normal!... You ain't been  
basing, is you?

(to J-Bone)

Has she?

J-Bone doesn't say anything.

ANGEL

No, I ain't, and neither one of y'all  
is my husband, so y'all can't tell  
me shit.

(darts back toward  
the bedroom)

ANGEL POV - MOVING BACK AWAY FROM LUCKY

LUCKY

You know what I told ya ass bout  
that!

The bedroom door is slammed shut. Lucky lets his little girl  
out of his lap and loose.

LUCKY

Told her if she start doing that  
shit, I'm gonna take Keisha to live  
with my momma.

J-BONE

(looking at cartoons)

She all right, Lucky. Believe me,  
I'd know.

LUCKY

Yeah.

(takes a swig, then  
places his forty on  
the table)

I gotta stop drinking this shit.  
Fuckin wit my brain.

From outside someone calls J-Bone. He reluctantly leaves the  
cartoons to sell some more crack. Lucky starts to take notice  
of all the clutter on the coffee table.

Downstairs, J-Bone makes a transaction. We see a piece of a  
crack pipe under the hair of a Black baby doll. This catches  
Lucky's attention. Lucky picks it up and notices Angel's  
lipstick is on its tip. He looks from J-Bone outside toward  
the bedroom. Then he gets up and walks in that direction.

INT. ANGEL'S PLACE - DAY - THE BEDROOM

Where we see Lucky opening the door. Inside Angel is just covering herself up after being with a gangsta. Lucky closes the door.

IDEA

Start shot of Lucky opening the door then PAN OVER to reveal Angel and the Gangsta surprised then PAN back to Lucky's reaction and he CLOSES the door.

INT. ANGEL'S PLACE - DAY - THE HALLWAY

As Lucky takes a moment to think. He walks off.

THE LIVING ROOM

Lucky picks up Keisha.

LUCKY

C'mon, we gonna go see Grandma. Your  
momma tripping.

Suddenly, Angel bursts from the bedroom, cursing and talking  
shit.

ANGEL

Who the fuck you think you is? You  
don't tell me what the fuck I can  
do! Who the fuck I can see!

EXT. ANGEL'S PLACE - DAY - OVERHEAD

Outside, downstairs, J-Bone begins to take notice of the  
storm brewing in the apartment. He looks up toward the noise.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ON CRANE

Where J-Bone runs around and up the stairs as we CRANE UP  
with him and past the front of the apartment to see Lucky  
and Angel, perfectly framed in a window, arguing up a storm.

INT. ANGEL'S SPLACE - DAY - BACK TO LIVING ROOM

As Lucky and Angel go at it. Lucky has Keisha in hand. J-  
Bone enters the apartment and comes in between the two of  
them.

LUCKY

Fuck you, bitch! How you gonna be  
fucking some nigga while my little  
girl around here?!  
(to the guy)  
What you looking at nigga?

GANGSTA #1  
 Hey, Bone, you better tell this  
 muthafucka to get outta ma face before  
 I get my strap!

J-BONE  
 Lucky! Lucky, calm down, G!

LUCKY  
 Naw, fuck her yamp ass!

GANGSTA #1  
 Who is this muthafucka?

Lucky throws the Gangsta a funny look. Then, breaking the first rule of the street, he turns his back on him to continue arguing with Angel.

GANGSTA #1  
 What you looking at, punk? Mark ass,  
 nigga!

Gangsta #1 sucka-punches Lucky. And they both start a big fight in the middle of the small apartment. J-Bone joins the fight, on Lucky's side.

J-BONE  
 Hey, hey!

Lucky and J-Bone kick his ass. Tha Gangsta is out cold. From the fire and light in Lucky's eyes, we can see shades of his previous life. He and J-Bone stand back to admire their handiwork. Outside we can see a crowd has gathered from the noise.

LUCKY  
 Aw, shit! I just got offa work. I  
 don't need this shit. C'mon, Keisha.  
 Later, Bone.

Lucky walks off, daughter in hand.

EXT. ANGEL'S PLACE - DAY

As Lucky, daughter in hand, quickly emerges. Behind him Angel throws a verbal arsenal of dirty insults and threats such as "Fuck you, niggs!" "You don't make no money, anyway!" "How you know she your baby?" etc.

As Lucky walks, we lower Angel's voice and hear another one of Justice's poems.

JUSTICE (V.O.)  
 "In a time of secret wooing today  
 prepares tomorrow's ruin. Left knows

JUSTICE (V.O.)  
 not what right is doing. My heart is  
 torn asunder. In a time of furtive  
 sighs. Sweet hellos and sad goodbyes.  
 Half truths told and entire lies. My  
 conscience echoes thunder."

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSIE'S SALON - LATE AFTERNOON

As we see Justice standing over her notebook reading a poem to Iesha while putting the finishing touches on her head. The salon is nearly empty. Jessie is sitting at the counter. Heywood is on the phone.

JUSTICE  
 "In a time when kingdoms come. Joy  
 is brief as summer's fun. Happiness,  
 its race has run. Then pain stalks  
 in to plunder."  
 (closes the notebook)  
 So what you think?

IESHA  
 It's pretty. What you call it?

JUSTICE  
 "In a Time."

Iesha's beeper goes off.

IESHA  
 (looking at her beeper)  
 Uh-oh, Chicago paging me.

Iesha gets out of the chair and goes to the receptionist's phone. Heywood is on the phone. His face is so serious. Jessie quickly points Iesha in the direction of the pay phone on the wall. Iesha sighs and walks that way.

JESSIE  
 You need some change?

IESHA (O.S.)  
 No.

Justice begins cleaning up her station.

THE COUNTER

Where Heywood gets off the phone. From the look on his face he has heard some terrible news.

JESSIE

What'd they say?

Heywood crosses over to the couch, where he sits with his head down. Jessie goes over to console him.

THE WALL PHONE

Where Iesha is on the phone with Chicago.

IESHA

(with attitude)

What you want? Ah, huh. Ah, huh.  
Yeah, I'm wit it. We got a hair show  
to go to up there anyway.

CHICAGO (O.S.)

Bring one'o your friends too. A Ane  
one.

IESHA

What you mean, a Ane one? You trying  
to say I got ugly friends?

Justice and Iesha make eye contact. Both smile. Suddenly in the background on Justice, we see and hear police lights converge on some brothers across the street. This catches Justice's attention.

BACK TO COUCH

Where Jessie is still consoling Heywood. Behind them out the window are the police.

JESSIE

What the hell they doing now?! I'm  
as glad as hell we getting outta  
here tomorrow.

JUSTICE

(walks up)

What's wrong?

Heywood gets up and walks away. Jessie stands. Justice joins Jessie at the window. Both stand in profile. Red and blue flashes of light flow across their faces. There are people leaving the shop throughout this scene.

JESSIE

You got your styles together for tha  
Oakland Show?

JUSTICE

(demure)

Yeah. I'ma play with Lisa and Gena's heads. If they like it, they like it. If they don't, they don't.

JESSIE

So you riding with us? You know we got us a little caravan going.

Justice nods. Jessie notices the stress on her face.

JESSIE

Justice. I know I ain't your momma. Hell, I ain't even old enough to be that. But we pretty close, and sometimes we talk like sisters. I just gotta tell ya, baby... you gotta move on... A man ain't nothin but a tool. You got to know when to take 'em out tha box and when to put 'em back in. And if ya lose one - well, you just... go get another... Take a chance, do somethin different for a change. There's always another man somewheres out here.

(looks out the window)

You gotta know sometimes you gonna lose one.

(matter offactly)

Like a blow dryer or a good brush. What I gotta do? Play Momma to everybody in this shop?

Justice thinks, looks down for a moment, then out the window once more.

BACK TO THE STALLS

Where we see Dexter, Heywood, and four other stylists: Marine, Colette, Lisa, and Gena.

DEXTER

Where's my blow dryer! I'm tired of all my shit disappearing alla time!

HEYWOOD

(coolly)

Calm down. Calm down. Here it is. I borrowed it for a wrap I had to do this morning.

DEXTER

Heywood! Why you always borrowing my shit without asking?!

HEYWOOD

I asked you for it this morning, and you said yes. Why are you crying over it like a bitch?

DEXTER

Who you calling a bitch? If anybody's a bitch, you a bitch!

HEYWOOD

Excuse me? You wan some? Maybe you forget I was Golden Gloves. You catchin me on tha wrong muthafuckinday.

MAXINE

All right. All right. Dexter! As much as you talk and you borrow everybody else's stuff all a time.  
(looks over his tools)  
Like my brush right here.

Maxine walks away. As she does, we notice the round beautiful fullness of her booty. Her hair is dyed blood red.

DEXTER

I was gonna give it to ya, Maxine, I just got distracted. Mmm-mmm.

HEYWOOD

Shit, I was wrestlin champ at Crenshaw High School.

JUSTICES STALL

Where she and Iesha meet up once more. Iesha begins playing with her new braids in the mirror.

JUSTICE

So what your new man talking bout?

IESHA

He want me to go onna run with 'em.  
(starts scrutinizing her hair)  
This is good now. I don't haveta be messing around with it. Just walk out tha house - ya know.

JUSTICE

Yeah. What's a run?

IESHA

Oh, you know what a run is.

Iesha keeps fixing her hair. It is apparent that she is luring Justice's curiosity. Justice takes the bait.

JUSTICE  
 (pulls Iesha's hand  
 away from her head)  
 No, I don't. And stop messing with  
 it. What's a run? He ain't no slanger  
 is he?

IESHA  
 A run... is, well, it's like this.  
 You really wanna know?

Justice gives her a frustrated look.

IESHA  
 Well, you know my boyfriend Chicago,  
 right?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE POST OFFICE - DUSK

Where we see Chicago point at a truck and sign a rec order.  
 "That one," he says. He is brushing his head with a flat  
 brush and arguing with an Oriental co-worker.

IESHA (V.O.)  
 You know he work at the post office  
 and all. The one on Century and Van  
 Ness. Well, every so often he and  
 his friend at work, they have to  
 drive up to Oakland in this mail  
 truck, see.

INT. JESSIE'S SALON - DUSK - BACK TO SCENE

IESHA  
 You listening?

JUSTICE  
 (her interest  
 apparently lost)  
 Yeah.

In the background the other stylists are leaving. A few of  
 them say goodbye to Justice before they go. Justice resumes  
 cleaning her station. Her interest in Iesha's proposal is  
 lost.

IESHA  
 (attempting to persuade)  
 Well, we get in this mail truck and  
 we drive up the coast, get drunk,

IESHA  
 eat Mexican food, and just have a  
 good time. It's fun!  
 (seeing no effect)  
 You ain't having it, huh?

JUSTICE  
 No, I'm not. That is too to the curb.  
 How am I gonna look like riding in  
 some mail truck? What you doing seeing  
 some mailman, anyway? You know they  
 don't make no money! What he gonna  
 do for you? Mail your bills for free?!

Iesha folds her arms in defiance of Justice's comments.

IESHA  
 (frustrated with  
 Justice)  
 How come you don't ever wanna have  
 no fun no more? Girl, the world is  
 just one big place waitin for us to  
 go out and fuck up in it. You gonna  
 end up being a straight spinster.

We see Justice's face. She is definitely looking more  
 hardened. Iesha pulls a wad of money out of her pocket and  
 gives it to Justice.

IESHA  
 (walking out)  
 Later. Thanks. You a Straight Buster!

Jessie comes up.

JESSIE  
 What she all mad about?

JUSTICE  
 Nuthin.

We hear on the salon's radio the beginning of "What You See,  
 Is What You Get!"

JESSIE  
 Listen, meet us at my place at eight  
 o'clock tomorrow. Come on, let's  
 close up.

WE PAN over to reveal Heywood dancing. He goes over to Jessie,  
 and they start to dance. Justice is left standing alone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JESSIE'S SALON - DUSK

As we see Justice, Jessie, and Heywood close the shop. Justice pulls the iron gate closed and secures its front. Jessie locks the locks. A car cruises by, and we hear some bumping sounds of hip-hop music coming from the inside speakers as well as the voices of some brothers shouting out compliments to these two beautiful sistahs. We also hear Heywood go on about how he loves himself, how life is beautiful. He tells Justice, "See, that's your problem, Justice. You don't love yourself."

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - NIGHT

It looks though it was decorated by her grandmother, which in fact it was. We notice a portrait of an elderly woman with similar features as Justice. There are also more than a few clocks around, one grandfather clock and a large twenty-four-hour sandclock are prominent. Justice has nothing but time on her hands. The air is full of ticking mingled with the sound of the outside streets. We dissolve through these images and slide into...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

We START outside the doorway and SLOWLY MOVE IN, invading Justice's privacy. Justice is busy rolling her hair in the mirror. She is alone. She looks at her face in the mirror. She is a mess. She lets her mind wander as she looks at the cold tile floor. Suddenly, Justice thinks she hears something. PAN from mirror to her face as she hears the sound.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Where Justice quietly stalks. She is nervous as hell. The sounds of the clocks become more prominent as she moves forward. Justice's POV moving forward, as she walks down the stairs.

THE DOORWAY

Where Justice stands. Someone is on the other side. We hear a slight scratch, then silence. Quiet tension. This is broken up by the sound of a friendly meow. Justice opens the door, and a big white cat enters.

JUSTICE

White Boy! C'mere.

She picks him up. Pets him, then he pulls away with a screech and runs offscreen.

JUSTICE

Yeah, you just like a boy. I should  
have you fixed.

THE LIVING ROOM

Where Justice picks up the remote control to turn on the television. On the screen is Bet's Midnight Love. There is a montage of romantic R&B videos. A flash of static and we...

CUT TO:

INT. IESHA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We see Iesha and Chicago do a smooth, close, sexy Ragamuffln dance. We hear some Ragamuffin music in the background.

INT. JUSTICE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT BACK TO JUSTICE

Justice seems dissatisfied. She turns the television off. Across the room we see Justice sitting at the piano. She looks bored.

CLOSE ON the piano keys as Justice presses a low-note key. The sound transcends us into the next scene.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JUSTICE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As we see Justice looking through a collection of 45 records. She picks out one.

THE RECORD PLAYER

As the record begins to spin. The first few bars of Stevie Wonder's "I Never Dreamed You'd Leave in Summer" float into the air.

JUSTICE

As she begins to groove to the music. She walks toward the kitchen.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - NIGHT - VARIOUS ANGLES

Of the empty rooms within the house.

INT. JUSTICE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Where she makes popcorn. Pours it in a bowl, then pours tabasco sauce on it.

EXT. JUSTICE HOME - NIGHT - THROUGH THE WINDOW FROM OUTSIDE

From a voyeuristic POV we see Justice grooving to the music and eating her popcorn. She picks up a candy bar off a table.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - NIGHT - HACK INSIDE

Justice stops dancing, candy bar in her mouth. She looks around for a moment and then into a mirror. Everything seems hue, then out of nowhere she bursts into tears. She cries a few tears for a few seconds, then wipes them away.

THE TELEPHONE

Justice picks up the receiver and enters some digits.

INT. IESHA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We see a pair of lips that turn out to be a telephone as Iesha picks up the receiver, and we follow it to reveal her and Chicago in bed together, Iesha lies on her stomach with Chicago on top. Tha skins are definitely on. Chicago is wearing nothing except it Chicago Bulls fisherman's cap. Ragamuffin music is playing in the background mon.

IESHA

Who dis? Oh, what's up, girl? You  
change your mind?... Somethin wrong?

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - NIGHT

JUSTICE

No. No, girl, I just wanted to talk.

INT. IESHA'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT - BACK TO IESHA

CHICAGO

(whispers)  
Get off tha phone. Get off tha phone.  
(louder)  
She busy!

IESHA

I'm talking to my friend, you mind?!  
(rolls her eyes and  
reaches into a bag  
of Fritos)  
Listen, J, I'm kinda busy. Could you  
call me back later?

JUSTICE (O.S.)

Yeah.

Iesha hangs up the phone.

## CHICAGO

Finally.

## IESHA

(getting up)

What you mean? You wasn't doing nuthin  
anyway!

## INT. JUSTICE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Where she sits. Her eyes wander around the room and then rest on her cat across the way. The cat looks back at her, then turns around and walks away into the hallway. Justice shakes her head. Then her eyes settle on something else.

## THE COFFEE TABLE

Where we move up on her notebook.

## JUSTICE

As she wipes a few more tears away and reaches for her notebook.

## INT. LUCKY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - A NOTEBOOK

As we see it being opened. Its pages are ratty. We notice its pages are colored with children's drawings: A family, a dog, a house.

## THE LIVING ROOM

Where we see Lucky lying on the couch like a potato watching television. In the foreground Keisha lies on the floor drawing in her notebook.

## ON TELEVISION

Is one of those Tom Foo Infomercials. He's that Chinese guy who sits on a boat with a lot of pretty women (a white) and says, "You can be rich too. "We can't tell if Lucky is looking at this or is lost in his own thoughts. He mumbles a rhyme about Black business versus Korean exploitation.

## KEISHA

As she looks at the screen. We hear a helicopter go overhead as its spotlight flows into the room. Keisha reacts to it with indifference and continues to draw. Lucky calmly cuts his eyes in that direction. The Light gets his attention and prompts him to get up and make a phone call.

## LUCKY

Operator? Yeah, give me Oakland,  
please. Area code 415.

INT. COUSIN KALIL'S SOUND LAB - OAKWVD - NIGHT

Where we travel past a ringing phone and some sound equipment to reveal a picture of a young man. Our attention settles on his eyes. This is Lucky's cousin, Kalil.

SUDDENLY WE HEAR THE SOUND OF GUNSHOTS.

INT. LUCKY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - BACK TO LUCKY

He takes his ear away from the phone and looks in the direction the shots were coming from. There is some question as to which end of the telephone the shots came from.

CLOSE ON LUCKY'S FACE

He looks up in the direction of the gunshots and down on the floor.

THE FLOOR - LUCKY'S POV

Where Keisha is rolled up in a ball.

LUCKY  
(hanging up phone)  
Go to bed.

Keisha gets up and goes toward the bedroom. Lucky looks at her exit, then goes toward the window and looks outside the blinds. On the TV in the background is the Life Alert commercial, "I've fallen and I can't get up." We see Lucky through the blinds in the foreground and the TV in the background.

THE DOORWAY

Where a woman enters. She is a short, medium-size woman, with a pretty but hardened face. The light in her eyes says she still has some humor left. This is Annie, Lucky's mother. She has a bag of groceries in hand.

LUCKY  
Hi, Momma! Need some help?

ANNIE  
Just like you to offer help when I only got one bag... So are you going up north to see Kalil this weekend?

LUCKY  
Yeah, look like we finally gonna get this music thing going. Tryin to hook somebody up to listen to these tapes - so I won't haveta be doing this post office shit no more.

ANNIE

Don't be cursing around me. Who you think I am, one'a your friends? Be glad you got an honest job. And don't be wearing out your welcome, going to Oakland every other weekend. You know how your Aunt Audrey can get!

LUCKY

It's not even like that, Momma.  
(sighs in frustration)

THE KITCHEN

Where Annie enters and begins to load the refrigerator up with goods. Lucky comes into the background.

LUCKY

Keisha's here.

Annie begins to glow with the mention of her grandchild.

ANNIE

Really? How's my grandbaby doing?

LUCKY

She fine. I want her to stay here, for good.

Annie reacts to this.

LUCKY

Angel been fucking up bad. Basing.

A pause. Silence. Neither of them says anything. Lucky begins to walk back toward the living room.

ANNIE

Are you gonna take care of her?

Lucky turns around. He thinks.

INT. KEISHA'S ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE ON KEISHA

In bed under covers.

CUT TO:

LUCKY

LUCKY

Yeah.

He walks away.

INT. LUCKY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - BACK TO THE LIVING ROOM

Where Lucky gets closer to the television and turns on the Sega Genesis Joe Montana Football Game. He begins playing.

ANNIE (O.S.)

Well, you just remember, that's your baby. I'm done raising kids! You need to quit playing them video games and figure out what you gonna do with your life. Time ain't forever!

LUCKY'S FACE

AS WE MOVE into his face as he plays. We hear bass beats get louder and louder, then boom! We smash cut to...

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - MORNING - MONTAGE

Of Justice preparing to go on the trip to Oakland. The music we hear comes from her living room stereo.

INT. JUSTICE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Where she throws her Louis Vuitton luggage bag. Several articles of clothing follow into the bag.

INT. JUSTICE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - THE TABLE

Where Justice arranges her cosmetology tools by order of preference and priority. We hear her mumble "I need this, and this, and this."

INT. JUSTICE'S HAT ROOM - DAY

When we see Justice look around in a room full of hats. She picks up a baseball cap with her name "JUSTICE" on the front.

INT. JUSTICE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - ANOTHER SETUP: THE LIVING ROOM

She runs frantically into frame. We quickly MOVE into her as she turns around and thinks for a moment.

EXT. JUSTICE'S HOME - DAY - THE FRONT PORCH

Where Justice fills a large dog bowl full of Meow Mix cat food. Her cat comes into frame at her feet and begins surveying this feast. When Justice goes back inside, her cat is joined by no less than eight other neighborhood cats.

INT. JUSTICES HOME - DAY

Justice turns off the stereo and grabs her keys.

EXT. JUSTICE'S HOME - THE FRONT WALKWAY - MORNING

Where Justice walks in a quick hustle toward her car. She turns off the alarm with a key-chain button. The car shouts out in an electronic voice, "Disarmed"

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Justice tries to start up her car. It won't start. She hits the dashboard in frustration and thinks for a moment.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - DAY - THE KITCHEN

Where we see Justice on the telephone. We hear the phone ringing on the other end.

INT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY - JESSE'S ANSWERING MACHINE

Which clicks on. We hear some smooth R&B music, then Jessie's voice. Over this we see the following images.

JESSIE (V.O.)  
 (sexy voice)  
 Hi. This is me. If you don't know  
 who me is, then you have no business  
 calling me.

THE LIVING ROOM

Where we see Jessie's meticulous but uniquely furnished apartment. Her place is just like her: polished, and all about the look.

JESSIE (V.O.)  
 If you do know who me is, then you  
 can do me a favor.

JESSIE'S BEDROOM

Where we see her large ornate bed. What tales it could tell if it could speak.

EXT. JESSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Where we see Jessie leaning up against her car, a 1992 Lexus. She takes the last toke of her cigarette and throws it on the ground and extinguishes it with her sharp-ass shoes. In the background we hear Heywood say, "We been waiting for half an hour. She ain't coming! Let her catch up!"

Jessie gets in the car and drives away as Justice's voice clicks in on her machine.

JESSIE (V.O.)  
 Leave me a message. Okay? Thank you.

JUSTICE (V.O.)  
 Jessie, it's me, Justice. You there?  
 Well, I'm running a...  
 (she decides it's  
 futile)  
 ... Shit!

INT. JUSTICE'S HOME - DAY - ANOTHER ANGLE

As she hangs up the phone. She thinks for a second, then dials some more digits.

JUSTICE  
 Iesha? What's up, cow?

EXT. JUSTICE'S HOME - DAY

Where Justice and Iesha walk past Justice's car.

IESHA  
 I'm telling you, girl, you gonna  
 have fun. There ain't nothing like  
 this.

Justice gives her car a kick and the alarm goes off. She quickly turns it off with her key. As they walk out, we follow with them until we let them cross and are on their backs to reveal the truck, which is a 1990 Ford-made U.S. Mail truck. It is all white with the government seal painted on both its sides. Justice stops in her tracks.

JUSTICE AND IESHA

As Justice takes in the sight of the truck, Iesha is all smiles, in contrast to Justice's discomfort.

JUSTICE  
 I don't believe I'm doing this.

IESHA  
 C'mon, we gonna have fun.

They walk toward the truck, and we see Lucky in the front seat. Lucky switches his US. Mail cap to a more comfortable Sox hat. He smiles at Justice. Offscreen we hear Chicago in the back of the truck.

CHICAGO (O.S.)  
 Muthafucka say that girl from  
 Ethiopia! That bitch from Compton!  
 How she gonna be from Ethiopia and  
 have a kid named Lammar?

LUCKY  
 She look it, though.

Justice walks back to Iesha on the side of the truck.

JUSTICE  
I don't know about this.

IESHA  
Why you gotta be a buster? C'mon,  
take a chance for a change! Cow!

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Where Lucky looks back at Chicago.

CHICAGO  
She Ane, Loc.

LUCKY  
Humph, I know that hoe. Crazy ass.  
She work in a beauty shop on Fifty-  
fourth.

THE PASSENGER DOOR

Where Justice and Iesha get into the truck. Lucky goes back into his quiet, cool, unassuming mode. Iesha is all smiles as she does the introductions.

IESHA  
Lucky. This my friend Justice.  
Justice, this is Lucky.

JUSTICE  
(with attitude)  
Hi.

LUCKY  
Whatsup.

THE BACK SEAT

Where we see Iesha and Chicago.

IESHA  
And you know Chicago already.

CHICAGO  
Whatsup, baby.

IESHA  
Baby? Well. Let's go.

Lucky starts up the engine.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

We see the front of the truck: Ford symbol all up in our faces. We PAN past the U.S. Mail symbol.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Lucky shifts into first gear as we TILT UP and he smiles at Justice.

JUSTICE

Who is not amused. She puts on sunglasses.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

WIDE

As we see the truck turn in the street to make a U.

EXT. CRENSHAW BOULEVARD - DAY

Where we see the truck go up the street and end on a Crenshaw sign. They are leaving their part of the city.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

From inside we see the overpass of the 10 freeway come up.

INSERT

The 10 freeway West.

A TRAFFIC LIGHT

Which we hear and see turn red.

EXT. CORNER OF ADAMS AND CRENSHAW - DAY

Where we see the truck come to stop.

THE TRUCK

Where Lucky waits for the light. He looks over on the other side of the street.

THE BUS STOP

Where an OLD WOMAN gets her pocketbook stolen.

BACK TO LUCKY

Who makes an expression that reads "Oh, well." There is no shock on his face. That's the way of the world, as Earth, Wind and Fire says.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Iesha and Chicago affectionately play with each other, Iesha gives him a couple of love taps.

CHICAGO

(laughs)

You can't make your mind up whether you wanna kiss me or hit me, huh? That your way of saying you like my ass?

IESHA

(jokingly)

I don't.

CHICAGO

(makes a muscle)

Feel that. Feel that muscle. That's man stuff.

IESHA

That ain't shit.

Chicago grabs one of her breasts.

IESHA

Oww, shit! Muthafucka, don't be grabbing my tittie like that !

ANGLE ON JUSTICE

Who glances behind her back at Iesha and Chicago and then into the sideview mirror once again.

EXT. THE TEN FREEWAY - DAY - MONTAGE OF ROAD SIGNS

Of various signs along the 10 freeway At first we go past signs that reads "LA CIENEGA", "CENTURY CITY/BEVERLY HILLS", then we begin to read "405 NORTH SACRAMENTO". Different shots of the truck traveling between dissolves.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

We start on a car as it comes in the other left-hand lane, and as it goes past, we WHIP PAN with it to reveal the truck. Lucky and Justice are in the front seat. Justice is obviously bored out of her mind. Lucky adjusts his vision from the road to her in an attempt to grab her attention.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Lucky is driving. He looks at Justice out of the corner of his eye. Justice is looking out at the road.

Her face is concealed behind sunglasses. We cannot tell if she is lost in the scenery or in her own world.

THE BACK

Where Chicago and Iesha are asleep. Iesha is cradled in his arms.

FRONT SEATS

Where there is virtual silence. All we can hear are the sounds of the engine, the road, and other passing cars. Lucky attempts to break the ice.

LUCKY

You kinda quiet, huh?

Justice doesn't say anything.

LUCKY

Guess so.

JUSTICE

Don't have nuthin to say.

LUCKY

Why you so mean? What you got to be so mean about?

Justice remains silent. She continues looking out the window.

LUCKY

Oh, so you one of them angry bitches, huh? A feminist.

Justice turns around. Lucky has gotten her attention.

JUSTICE

What did you call me?

LUCKY

(matter of factly)  
I said you a mean bitch.

JUSTICE

(taking off her glasses)  
No, nigga! You don't call me no bitch!  
You don't know me! You don't know  
nothing about me!

LUCKY

I know you a bitch! Look at the way  
you actin. I been trying to act all  
courteous and shit, and I gotta call

LUCKY  
 you a bitch to even get your damn  
 attention!

JUSTICE  
 Fuck you, I ain't no bitch, I am a  
 Black woman! I deserve respect! If  
 I'm a bitch, yo momma's a bitch!

LUCKY  
 You a bitch! We ain't talking about  
 my momma! We talking about you! Think  
 you too fine to talk to nobody! L.A.  
 bitches! I'm tired of'em!

Justice is fuming now.

JUSTICE  
 Let me out!

LUCKY  
 (coolly)  
 Where you gonna go, huh? Where you  
 gonna go?

JUSTICE  
 Fuck you! I'll walk!

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Where we see the truck pull to the side of the road. The  
 passenger door opens, and Justice gets out, bag in hand.

LUCKY  
 Get tha fuck out then, bitch! Walk  
 your ass home! It'll do them big-ass  
 thighs of yours some good anyway!  
 Cottage cheese legs!

Justice turns, fuming mad. The last thing you should joke  
 about with a woman is her weight, even if she has a nice  
 body.

JUSTICE  
 I better not see your ass around  
 L.A. 'cause I'm gonna get some niggas  
 to fuck you up!

THE BACK OF THE TRUCK

Where Iesha wakes up from the sound of Justice and Lucky  
 arguing. She mumbles, "What's going on?!"

JUSTICE  
 They gonna fuck you up!

LUCKY  
Fuck you, bitch!

JUSTICE  
Fuck you up!

This exchange goes on one more time, then Lucky cuts it off by abruptly closing the passenger door in Justice's face. Iesha pokes her head up from it.

IESHA  
What you doing!? What's happening?  
Where my girl at?!

LUCKY  
(shifting into first  
gear)  
I'm leaving that bitch!

IESHA  
Leaving her! You can't just leave my  
friend out here in the middle of  
nowhere?! Chicago! Chicago, wake up!

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

From on HIGH we see the truck get back on the road and drive off as we COME DOWN to reveal Justice. She is pissed off beyond pissitivity!

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Where we see Lucky driving. He is pissed off also. He is thinking heavily about his actions.

IESHA (O.S.)  
Chicago! Lucky left Justice! Lucky  
left Justice!

CHICAGO (O.S.)  
So what! I'm trying to sleep!

IESHA (O.S.)  
But he left her! He left her out in  
the middle of nowhere!

Chicago comes up close to the back of Lucky's head.

CHICAGO (O.S.)  
Lucky. What's up, G?

Lucky sighs and looks into his side mirror.

WIPE:

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Justice is in the foreground, and the truck is following along in the background. Iesha is trying to convince her to get into the truck.

IESHA

C'mon, Justice, get in the truck.  
Ain't you kinda hot? Lucky said he'd apologize.

LUCKY

Looks at Iesha. His face is about as nonapologetic as you can get. Ain't no apologies jumping off today.

IESHA

C'mon, Justice. J!  
(sees something)

Justice walks past a big diamondback rattlesnake. She is so mad, she doesn't even notice it, Iesha plays it off and continues to call Justice.

IESHA

(turns to Lucky)  
Justice! She get kinda stubborn sometimes. Stop the truck.

The truck stops, and Iesha gets out. Chicago gets into the front seat.

WIDE

As we see Iesha get out of the truck and walk over to her friend. Lucky exits the driver's side and goes to the back of the truck.

THE BACK OF THE TRUCK

Where Lucky opens the wide doors to let Justice and Iesha into the back.

Justice and Iesha come around the corner. The latter holds a consoling arm around her friend's shoulders. Justice and Lucky come face to face.

JUSTICE

(looks up and then  
with a mean face)  
You still gonna get fucked up!

Iesha smiles and tries to laugh it off. The two women climb inside. Lucky begins to close the door, but not before giving his comeback to Justice's threat.

LUCKY

Frankly, my dear. I don't give a fuck.

INT. ROADSIDE - THE FOREST - DAY

INT. JESSIE'S CAR - DAY - HOOTCH MONTAGE

We see a pair of nails being filed with a nail filer. A compact mirror, where we see eye shadow being applied to a beautiful brown eye. A PAIR OF NAILS Are being painted bright red. The hand is brought up to reveal they belong to Colette. She admires her handiwork.

EXT. ROADSIDE - THE FOREST - DAY

Heywood walks up looking through the viewfinder of a small videocam.

VIDEOCAM POV

Where we see Jessie in the foreground standing next to her car. In the far background we can hear the rest of their party off in the woods. We should get the idea some of them are taking a leak.

JESSIE

It's not on. You gotta push the button.

HEYWOOD (V.O.)

What button?

JESSIE

The red one.

HEYWOOD (V.O.)

Oh, this button.  
(pushes the button  
and the word REC  
flashes on the screen  
in the left-hand  
corner)

It's on. Showtime!

Jessie proceeds to act a fool and show off in front of the camera.

JESSIE

Well, here I am. It's me.

JESSIE  
 (coolly poses on her  
 car and takes a toke  
 of her cigarette)  
 In the wilderness. The wild blue  
 yonder.

In the background we can see Dexter come out of the trees zipping up his pants. He calls back in the trees to one of the women.

DEXTER  
 Hey, Marine! I think I saw a snake  
 back there. You better hope it don't  
 bite your big ass!

JESSIE  
 They gettin close to nature.  
 (laughs)

Heywood laughs too, offscreen. He drops the camera.

WIPE:

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Where Lucky and Chicago ride along in the front seat. Chicago is driving with one hand and brushing his head with the other. Chicago starts humming a few bars of a song. Lucky joins in with a bass beat from his mouth. We soon recognize the theme from Sanford and Son.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

We see the truck drive along.

INT. THE TRUCK - LATER

CHICAGO  
 I'm telling ya, it was him. Saw 'em  
 in the liquor store.

LUCKY  
 Which one?

CHICAGO  
 J and B on Manchester?

LUCKY  
 ... You out your mind!

CHICAGO  
 He had the beard, tha voice,  
 everything. He bought a forty of Red  
 Bull.

LUCKY

You saw Marvin Gaye in the liquor store, buying a forty? You stupid muthafucka!

The truck makes a funny noise.

CHICAGO

(rushing his head)

It's thirsty. Pull the second tank.

Lucky pulls a knob. The car makes another weird noise. Chicago and Lucky look at each other, bewildered.

BACK OF TRUCK

Justice and Iesha look at each other. Justice is making shapes with a piece of string.

LUCKY

Empty. I thought you filled 'em.

CHICAGO

I thought you did.

Lucky gives him a look that reads "You stupid muthafucka."

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY

Where we see the truck pull into one of the stations. In the background we see an eight teen-wheeler semi truck pull into the other side.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Lucky hops out of the truck. He walks toward the back of the truck, just as Iesha and Justice open the back doors. We hold on them for a moment.

IESHA

Good, now I can get me some liquor!

They walk past as we follow them and end on Chicago.

CHICAGO

Hey, hey, don't get crazy now! And buy me a forty and some Cheetos!

The girls walk on. Iesha waves off Chicago.

LUCKY (O.S.)

You need to put her in check!

LUCKY (O.S.)

C'mon, let's hurry up. Try to stay on schedule for a change. Fuck that CP time!

THE PUMP - OPPOSITE SIDE

A foot steps out of the cab. A pair of gloves are taken off, revealing worn callused hands. The same hands unscrew the cap off the truck's massive gas tank.

ONE SIDE OF THE GAS

Where we see Lucky's hand grab the handle. Another hand grabs at the same time.

LUCKY

Looks up to see. A large white Trucker. Checked shirt, suspenders, big leather boots. There is a short moment between Lucky and the trucker.

LUCKY

You mind?

The Trucker nods, indicating that he doesn't. He continues to study Lucky.

OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE PUMP

Where Lucky inserts the nozzle into the tank and begins to pump the gas.

CUT TO:

INT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY - THE FREEZER

Where Iesha is selecting liquor.

IESHA

I gotta have my Gordon's and Socko. Justice, check that freezer, see if they got some Super Socko... Hey, they don't have Old E! Y'all don't have no Old English?

THE COUNTER

Where the cashier throws his hands up, indicating that they don't carry.

JUSTICE

Girl, don't you know they don't sell that outside of Black neighborhoods?

IESHA

Oh yeah, I forgot. Oh well, Chicago  
gonna have to settle for a Miller  
Light.

JUSTICE

Don't get too crazy now. You know  
how you get when you drink. You heard  
what your man said.

IESHA

Chicago?! I don't listen to him. He  
ain't my daddy!

JUSTICE

He's supposed to be your man, though.

IESHA

Sheeehit! I got him sprung! I be  
making that fool stutter. You know  
he start stuttering when he lying  
and shit.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY - CLOSE - CHICAGO

CHICAGO

Now, now, now, wait, wait, wait,  
see, see, see!

ANOTHER ANGLE

LUCKY

Money?! You give her money?!

CHICAGO

Just sometimes. I like my woman to  
have tha best.

LUCKY

You getting played! How much o' that  
coochie she be giving up?

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY - BACK TO STORE

IESHA

I don't hardly have to do nothing. I  
be rationing it to 'em.

JUSTICE

Rationing tha booty!  
(laughs)

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY - BACK TO PUMP

CHICAGO

Aw, nigga, I be knocking that shit  
out every other day. She can't get  
enough o' me.

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY BACK TO STORE

IESHA

That nigga is weak! Ain't got no  
rhythm! Plus, he a preemie! You know  
what a preemie is? Two-minute brotha.

Justice laughs.

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY - BACK TO PUMP

LUCKY

You paying for it!

CHICAGO

Wait, wait, wait!

LUCKY

Naw, nigga, you can't say shit! You  
paying for it! Paging for tha poon!

He glances across the pump.

THE TRUCK

Where the Trucker stands patiently with his arms folded.

LUCKY

Be done in a second, cuzz.

The Trucker waits. Arms folded.

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY - BACK TO STORE

Justice is at the counter.

JUSTICE

You got everything?

IESHA

Yeah. So what you think of Lucky?

JUSTICE

I don't. Look.

She points to a display where we see some toy water guns.

IESHA

Oooow!

The cashier has finished. He has a total.

CASHIER

That'll be \$15.35.

Justice walks back over to the counter.

JUSTICE (O.S.)

I got it. Iesha, pick up some o'those  
blow bubbles, too.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY

Where we see Justice burst out of the store laughing. She turns and begins squirting water at Iesha. We travel with them back to the truck as Iesha playfully squirts Chicago. He starts running after her. He catches her, and they affectionately play with each other. The contrast of their play to the tension between Lucky and Justice is apparent. They share a quiet, uncomfortable glance. Justice gets into the passenger seat.

LUCKY

(to Chicago and Iesha)

Get in tha truck! We don't have all  
day! Shit! I gotta be somewhere.

He walks around the side of the truck.

THE PUMP

Where the Trucker begins pumping his gas.

EXT. ROADSIDE COFFEE AND GAS - DAY

Where we see the truck take off once more.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY - THE BACK

Where Iesha and Chicago are kicking it. Chicago looks bored. Iesha is mixing the gin with the Super Socko.

IESHA

Drink some o' this.

She hands him the Super Socko. Chicago takes a squig.

IESHA

Drink some more. To the middle.

Chicago takes a couple more drinks. He checks for the level of Socko left. Iesha takes the bottle back and fills it with gin. She then proceeds to shake it up.

CHICAGO  
Lemme have my forty.

He looks in the bag.

IESHA  
They didn't have no Old E.

Chicago looks frustrated. Iesha has finished her concoction. She samples her work. Taking a small sip from the bottle.

IESHA  
Mmmmmmm.

She passes the bottle to Chicago, who takes a sip. Over their drinking we hear Justice's voice.

JUSTICE (V.O.)  
"Love is a juice with many tastes.  
Some bitter, others sweet. A wine  
which has few..."

INT. THE TRUCK - FRONT - DAY

JUSTICE'S NOTEBOOK

Where we see her hand write.

JUSTICE (V.O.)  
"... few... vineyards."

Justice is lost in thought. Where to go from here?

LUCKY

Takes notice of her writing out of the corner of his eye.

JUSTICE

Notices Lucky looking at her periodically. She takes particular notice of his dirty nasty fingernails.

JUSTICE  
Your fingernails are dirty.

Lucky looks at his fingernails. He seems kinda self-conscious and moves his hands to another part of the steering wheel.

LUCKY  
What you writing?

JUSTICE  
 (a beat)  
 Stuff.

There is an uneasy space of time between them. They look at each other out of the corner of their eyes. They almost make eye contact.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

Where we see the truck zoom up the road and into the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY - THE BACK

Where Chicago and Iesha settle in the back seat letting the liquor take its effect.

CHICAGO  
 Say you love me.

IESHA  
 Why?

CHICAGO  
 Cause I said so!

IESHA  
 That's what you wanna hear, huh?

CHICAGO  
 Yeah.

IESHA  
 Really? Good.  
 (gets up, stretches  
 her arms)  
 You're so dumb. The more I teach you  
 the dumber you get.  
 (does a double take  
 and smells the air)  
 Mmmmm. S'mthing smell good.

THE FRONT FROM THE OUTSIDE - DRIVER'S SIDE

Where Lucky and Justice sit.

LUCKY  
 What's that smell?

Justice samples the air with her beautiful nose.

JUSTICE  
 Barbecue.

Chicago comes up front.

CHICAGO  
Y'all smell that?

LUCKY  
(his eyes catching  
something)  
Yeah.

FROM THE INSIDE OF THE WINDOW

We see a sign which reads "JOHNSON FAMILY REUNION".

IESHA  
What this?

JUSTICE  
(with open eyes)  
Oh shit! Look!

ANOTHER ANGLE

As we see a virtual ocean of Black faces in the distance. There is a gathering of some kind going on in a large park by the side of the freeway. We start on this image, then PAN over to reveal the truck moving forward.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

As we travel alongside the truck as we see it in relation to the reunion. Note Three Levels: Truck in foreground / Trees in middleground / People in background / Characters speak in Long Shot.

CHICAGO  
C'mon, we gonna get some barbecue.

LUCKY  
We can't stay long, man. I gotta get to Oakland. Why niggas always gotta be thinking about eating?! You eat too much anyway. That's why you head so big. Hair look like taco meat.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

As the truck stops and everybody gets out and walks toward the gathering of people. Iesha lags behind and takes the last couple of sips from her drink. She takes one long last hit.

EXT. THE JOHNSON FAMILY REUNION - DAY

WIDE as we START on Lucky, Justice, and Chicago, and Iesha running to catch up. They are walking forward just as we SWING behind them and CRANE UP to reveal a banner that reads "JOHNSON FAMILY REUNION".

MONTAGE OF IMAGES

We see people talking, playing games, some hugging, reunions between relatives, old mixing with the young, some dancing and a lot of food being cooked. This is the Johnson Family Reunion. We emphasize this last image of food being cooked.

LUCKY AND CHICAGO

Look at each other. Their intentions are obvious.

IESHA

Catches up as we PULL BACK with her, to reveal all four of them.

IESHA

What y'all gonna do?

CHICAGO

We gonna eat.

JUSTICE

This ain't your family!

LUCKY

We Black. They don't know that.

ANGLE

Where we see a brother who is walking through the crowd obviously drunk. He is about thirty years old and has a beard. He is also talking very loud greeting everyone around him. Everyone around seems to be amused by his antics. He is known as Cousin Pete.

COUSIN PETE

My cousins! My cousins! I'm with my family! My family!

(sees a couple of  
line women standing  
together)

Mmmm, how you doing? We related, huh?

The woman nods yes.

COUSIN PETE  
 Oh, really? Well, you know, third  
 removed don't count.  
 (laughs and moves on)

The crowd parts to reveal him as he walks toward the foursome.

COUSIN PETE  
 My cousins! My cousins! What's up,  
 cousin? You got a pretty girlfriend  
 here. Y'all make a good couple.

JUSTICE'S FACE

As she reacts to being called Lucky's girlfriend.

COUSIN PETE  
 What's your name, cousin?

LUCKY  
 People call me Lucky.

COUSIN PETE  
 With a lady like this, I'd say that  
 too. What's your name, sweet li'l  
 West Coast thang?

JUSTICE  
 Justice.

COUSIN PETE  
 Justice? You mean like the law, huh?

JUSTICE  
 Yeah.

COUSIN PETE  
 How you get a name like that?!

JUSTICE  
 It's a long story. This is -

IESHA  
 (putting on airs)  
 Iesha. And this is my husband,  
 Chicago.

We see subtle eye contact between Iesha and Justice.

CHICAGO  
 How you doing?

LUCKY  
 Yo, ah - cousin, what's your name?

## COUSIN PETE

Just call me Cousin Pete. I want  
y'all to meet some family.

They begin to walk, Cousin Pete leading the way.

## ANOTHER ANGLE: MOVING BACK

As Cousin Pete begins introducing Lucky, Justice, Iesha, and Chicago to the Johnson family. He introduces a few relatives, then we switch to a POV shot and we GO PAST their faces and see them as he says their names. We end on three old ladies sitting at a picnic table.

## COUSIN PETE (V.O.)

This is Aunt Jessica, Uncle Herb,  
Aunt Aida Pearl, Uncle Fred and his  
wife Wilma, Cousin Isaac, Cousin  
James, Cousin Kwame, the Kids, I  
don't know all of they names, and  
sitting here is Aunt June, Aunt May,  
and Aunt April.

## THE BENCH

Where three old women sit Aunt April, Aunt May, and Aunt June. From their faces we can tell they are full of opinions.

## COUSIN PETE

So y'all just enjoy yourself, and  
have fun.

Iesha and Chicago go to sit down on the bench across the table from the three old women. Iesha sits in Chicago's lap.

## LUCKY

That food looks good.

## COUSIN PETE

Don't it? Go on, help yourself Lucky  
and Justice walk toward the tables  
with food.

## ANGLE: MOVING BACKWARD

On Iesha and Chicago

## IESHA

(wit to sarcasm)  
Goodbye. Don't they make such a nice  
couple?

JUSTICE

Turns and throws Iesha a nasty look and continues walking with Lucky.

BACK TO TABLE

Where Iesha and Chicago settle. They are both thoroughly amused by the game they are playing. The both a them then turn to notice

THE STERN FACES OF THE THREE OLD WOMEN

We PAN past the stern faces of Aunt April, Aunt May, and Aunt June. We rest on June's face as she speaks...

AUNT JUNE

Are y'all in love?

IESHA AND CHICAGO

Look at each other.

IESHA

Yeah.

AUNT JUNE

Do you know what love is child?

IESHA

No.

AUNT MAY

How can you be in love if'n you don't know what it is?

IESHA

That's just how things go.

The three women are quiet for a moment.

AUNT MAY

Are y'all married?

IESHA

Yeah.

AUNT APRIL

You young. How long you been married?

IESHA

(looks at Chicago)  
Six months.

Aunt June's hawklike eyes probe Iesha.

AUNT JUNE'S POV

We see Iesha's hand on Chicago's shoulder. Then we TILT UP to reveal her face. She looks at her hand searching for a ring.

IESHA  
Oh, I don't wear it alla time.

WIDE

Of the table. You could cut the tension in the air with a knife.

AUNT JUNE  
(to Chicago)  
You don't mind if she don't wear your ring?

IESHA  
(answers for him)  
No, he don't mind.

AUNT MAY  
I think he can answer for himself.  
If he's a real man. A real man always answers for himself.

CHICAGO  
(a beat)  
No. No-I don't mind.

The three women shake their heads. One says, "Shoot, my husband kill me if I didn't wear no ring."

CUT TO:

EXT. THE JOHNSON FAMILY REUNION - DAY - THE FOOD TABLE

Where Lucky is filling his plate with food. Justice is nearby. Next to her is a woman with a baby. The woman is trying to fix a plate of food and hold the baby at the same time.

JUSTICE  
Damn you greedy.

LUCKY  
Gotta eat to live.

Justice notices the woman having trouble juggling baby and plate.

JUSTICE  
You need help?

WOMAN

Thank you.

Justice takes the baby in her arms. Lucky looks at her out of the corner of his eye and continues surveying the food.

JUSTICE

Aww, she's so cute.

We see the baby's face. She is a black angel.

LUCKY

(with sarcasm)

You be seeing them professional men,  
huh? Doctors, lawyers, pharmacists.

(tastes something,  
then adds)

Street pharmacists?

Justice looks at Lucky, then down at the baby.

LUCKY

Ah huh, I knew you was like that.

Justice says nothing.

The Woman finishes fixing her plate.

WOMAN

Here, I'll take her.

JUSTICE

She's beautiful. What's her name?

WOMAN

Her name is Imani.

The Woman walks off to a table and sits with another group of relatives.

JUSTICE

You got a kid?

LUCKY

Why?

JUSTICE

'Cause you look the type.

Lucky begins to walk.

ANOTHER ANGLE - WIDE TRAVELING

As they walk together and talk. In the background we see kids playing, and some old men throwing horseshoes, etc.

LUCKY  
What's the type?

JUSTICE  
Dunno, you just look like - like -

Lucky looks at her for a second, stops walking, and walks on.

LUCKY  
(changing the subject)  
Anyway! You got any kids?

JUSTICE  
(vehemently)  
Hell, naw. I don't like kids.

They arrive at some chairs and sit down.

LUCKY  
Don't look like that to me!  
(looks around)  
This is good. You ever been to one  
a' these?

JUSTICE  
No. I don't have a lot of family.  
The family I have ain't that close.

LUCKY  
(looking around)  
Well, I never seen this many Black  
folks in one place where there wasn't  
no fight. Hmmm... Now what about  
these street pharmacists you use ta  
go out with?

JUSTICE  
Yeah, I only went out with one... He  
was my first boyfriend - my first  
love.

LUCKY  
So you was out for tha money, huh?

JUSTICE  
No. Just 'cause somebody does a  
certain something for a livin don't  
make 'em a bad person. Some people  
don't choose their path in life.  
They let other folks write their  
story. Most of them in jail now.  
(adds)  
There's some fine niggas in jail.

LUCKY  
You used to count his money?

JUSTICE  
Yep.

LUCKY  
Write letters to 'em while he was  
inna county jail?

JUSTICE  
Mmmm-huh. That's right.

LUCKY  
You used to send 'em naked pictures  
while they in jail too?

CLOSE - JUSTICE'S FACE

JUSTICE  
(a beat)  
You getting too personal... Oh what  
do you know. You don't even keep  
your nails clean!

She gets up and walks away. Lucky just looks at her, grins,  
and shakes his head.

DISSOLVE TO:

DIFFERENT IMAGES

Kids playing. Two little boys fight and are broken up by  
Cousin Pete, who says, "Y'all family. Don 't fight."

OLD MEN THROWING HORSESHOES

Some young people are dancing. A few older folk join in on  
the fun. Lucky and Chicago playing a game of spades with  
Cousin Pete and another man. Iesha going to an ice chest to  
get a Bacardi Cooler. Justice playing with some children.  
The three old women sitting like statues. Lucky and Chicago  
winning a hand, then starting the game up again. Cousin Pete  
shouts out, "Awright then, let's play for money, play for  
money!" Iesha getting another drink. Justice resting on the  
beautiful green grass as a little girl puts a flower in her  
hair. Suddenly, she turns to notice something. One of the  
old women taps another as all three direct their attention  
toward Iesha, who is talking to some brother, a fly-looking  
Johnny Gill type. There is definite interest in both their  
eyes. Justice looks from this sight over toward Chicago.

## THE CARD TABLE

Where Chicago notices this also. He is pissed. Offscreen, someone asks him to deal his hand. He does so, never taking his eyes off of...

## IESHA AND JOHNNY

We PAN from Iesha's drunken smiling face to the handsome face of Johnny.

## THE OLD WOMEN

Are having a field day. All three of them are talking away and looking out the corner of their eyes.

## JUSTICE

Gets up from the children and walks over toward Iesha.

## WIDE

As Justice approaches Iesha and Johnny.

## JUSTICE

I gotta talk to my friend for a second.

## RACK TO CARD TABLE

Where we MOVE IN on Chicago's face.

## LUCKY

Looks at Chicago and then over toward Iesha.

## BACK TO SHOT

Where Iesha pulls away from Justice and goes back to talking with her new friend.

## CHICAGO

Gets up and throws his entire hand down. We PAN OVER to Lucky, who takes off his hat and scratches his head.

## LUCKY

(under his breath)  
Oh, shit!

## WIDE SHOT

As Chicago walks into the shot toward Iesha and Johnny. Iesha looks over at Chicago nonchalantly. She doesn't even acknowledge his presence. Chicago grabs her arm.

Iesha pulls away and tries to resume her conversation. Chicago pulls her again, and Iesha walks away toward the parking lot. Johnny tries to interfere and Chicago pushes him. She begins cursing loudly, making it more of a scene than it already was. Chicago and the brother get into a fight. Several family members attempt to break it up.

JUSTICE

Is embarrassed. She looks over at Lucky.

LUCKY

Looks back at her. Their eyes meet.

LUCKY  
 (to the card group)  
 Y'all don't mind if I take some food  
 to go, do you?

THE TABLE

Where the old women sit.

AUNT JUNE  
 Humph, that ain't gonna last long.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY - OVERHEAD ON CRANE

As we see the empty road, then ZOOM as the truck goes up into the distance. We hear Iesha and Chicago arguing.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Lucky is driving once more. He taps his fingers on the steering wheel and looks over at Justice who looks at him shakes her head and looks out the window.

THE BACK

Where Chicago and Iesha are going at it. Swinging insults like swords.

CHICAGO  
 What's your muthafuckin problem,  
 huh? What's your muthafuckin problem?  
 Why you disrespect me like that,  
 huh?! Why you disrespect me?

IESHA  
 Fuck you! You don't own me!

CHICAGO

Fuck you, bitch! Fuck you and your pussy!

IESHA

If I'm a bitch, why you wit me, huh? Why you wit me?! Leave, then! Step tha fuck off! 'Cause I ain't in the business of keeping niggas when they don't wanna be kept! All that talking - do it while you walkin.

THE FRONT

Justice is fed up. She looks over at Lucky.

JUSTICE

Pull over.

EXT. RESTSTOP - DAY

Where the truck pulls over in line with a row of ten-wheelers.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY THE BACK

CHICAGO

Why we stopping?

IESHA

Good, I gotta pee.

CHICAGO

'Cause you drinking too much! That's your goddamn problem. You an alcoholic bitch!

They continue arguing back and forth.

EXT. RESTSTOP - DAY - THE PASSENGER DOOR

Justice hops out of the truck and goes toward the back.

THE BACK OF THE TRUCK

Where Iesha (bottle in hand) opens the door.

JUSTICE

(coolly)

C'mere. I gotta talk to you.

Iesha faintly sees the anger on Justice's face but is not aware that it is directed toward her.

IESHA  
 (sweetly and drunk)  
 What's wrong, J? Lucky talking shit  
 again? I'ma fuck him up! Where he  
 at?

Justice lures Iesha out to the middle of the parking lot. The latter is holding her stomach. A few truckers walk past to notice the two girls arguing. Iesha begins to convulse, then she throws up on the ground. She calmly and coolly accepts a tissue from Justice, then says...

IESHA  
 What's the problem?

Justice grabs the bottle out of Iesha's hand.

IESHA  
 My drink!

JUSTICE  
 (smashes the bottle  
 on the ground)  
 This is the problem!  
 (pushes Iesha in anger)  
 You acting like a stupid bitch, Iesha!  
 A stupid, alcoholic bitch! I'm tired  
 of seeing you get drunk! That's why  
 I don't go nowhere with you - 'cause  
 you get crazy! You just like my  
 damn... momma was.

Iesha looks at her angry friend as if stunned. Actually, she is drunk. Iesha sways back and forth as if in a daze. She begins crying.

IESHA  
 (crying)  
 I'm sorry.

Justice's anger gives way to compassion. She hugs her friend.

WIDE SHOT

As they hug each other and an eighteen-wheeler pulls out and away.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As the large truck goes past, to reveal the women once more.

JUSTICE  
 It's all right. It's all right. You  
 my girl and all, but you gotta chill  
 on the liquor.

Iesha continues to cry, mumbling in a drunken tone about how much she values Justice's friendship: "You helped me when I had that abortion," etc. Crying gives way to sniffles, and Iesha tries to regain her composure. She turns around to see...

REVERSE ANGLE THE TRUCK

Where Lucky and Chicago sit by the front of the truck. Chicago is looking at Iesha.

IESHA'S FACE

As she wipes her tears away and stands up straight. She looks in her Fend bag to pull out some tissue, maintaining her dignity in front of the men.

IESHA  
I gotta pee.

Justice looks at her friend and almost cracks a smile. They walk off toward a restroom.

JUSTICE  
(playfully)  
Cow.

IESHA  
You a cow. Cow! Moo!

BACK TO TRUCK

LUCKY  
I'm telling you she's crazy, Loc.  
You better get ridda her.

CHICAGO  
(upset)  
Damn man, I gotta piss. I 'ma go  
over here and piss in the field. Get  
my nuts close to nature and shit.

As they walk off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - SEVEN YEARS EARLIER - DAY

We see an early-model 1 980s car pull up the driveway. Out the passenger door springs a twelve-year-old Black girl. This is Justice, seven years younger. She runs toward the house. The driver of the car is Geneva, Justice's grandmother.

GENEVA

Girl, you better come on back here  
and help me with these grocery bags!

THE STEPS

Where Young Justice reluctantly shrugs her shoulders and  
walks back toward the car.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - THE KITCHEN - DAY

Where Justice and her grandmother put away the groceries.  
Geneva snatches a box of cookies out of Justice's hand.

GENEVA

You'll spoil your dinner. I'm making  
ox tails.  
(calls out)  
Alfrieda! Frieda! Go tell your mother  
to come here!

The little girl takes off.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - THE STAIRS

As Young Justice shoots up the stairs.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

Justice the adult woman arrives at the top of the stairs.

YOUNG JUSTICE

Momma! Momma! Nanny want you!

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - AN OFFICE ROOM

As Justice looks in. No Momma here.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - JUSTICE'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM

No one here.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - THE BATHROOM

We see Justice walk forth. She slows down as she discovers  
the body of a woman collapsed on a tile floor of the bathroom.

YOUNG JUSTICE'S FACE

She screams!

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - BACK TO KITCHEN

As Justice's grandmother hears her screams.

INT. JUSTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - THE TILE FLOOR

We see an opened bottle of pills. Different angles of pills on the tile floor.

Idea: Image of Justice's mother's hand open, holding pills, in the background.

OVERHEAD

Justice's grandmother grabs Justice and discovers the body.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Justice is pulled away. Geneva turns her face away from the horror of Justice's dead mother and into the hallway mirror. Justice covers her face up, then slowly looks at her reflection. The light behind her changes, and we are back into...

INT. REST STOP BATHROOM - DAY

Justice looking at herself in the mirror. A beat. Iesha comes out of the stall behind Justice and taps her shoulder.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Iesha walks past and we end on Justice.

IESHA

Let's go.

EXT. RESTSTOP - DAY - MINUTES LATER A BENCH

Where Lucky sits eating some leftover barbecue. Music is playing from his small boom box. Chicago is lost in thought. He is visibly shaken by the recent events. He looks out along the road and then down toward the ground.

LUCKY

Hey, hey, hey, pick your head up.  
Don't be a buster! You don't want  
her to know you upset! Be cool!

CHICAGO'S FEET

Where his shoelaces are untied.

CHICAGO

I gotta tie my shoelace.

LUCKY

Wait, just wait... Leave it untied -  
it'll look better that way.

CHICAGO

That shit played out years ago.

Chicago bends down to fasten his shoes. Lucky looks at him and shakes his head. Then he looks up to notice

CHICAGO'S POV - LOW ANGLE

While he is down on his knees, Justice and Iesha walk up. Chicago looks up and sees Justice, who walks away to reveal Iesha. Iesha mumbles the "shake it to the east/shake it to the west" cheer.

WIDE

As Justice sits on one side with Lucky. Iesha puts her arms around Chicago's neck and gives him a kiss. Justice and Lucky look at this exchange out of the corner of their eyes.

CHICAGO

As he attempts to stay angry in light of this loving treatment. He looks over at Lucky.

CHICAGO

(uncomfortable)

Is it good?

LUCKY

Jammin.

Justice looks away, listening to the music.

JUSTICE

This is nice. Who's this?

LUCKY

My cousin Kalil.

JUSTICE

(matter of factly)

He's flowing.

LUCKY

I give him ideas and stuff sometimes. That's who I'm going to see now. We got this music thing going.

CHICAGO

(sarcastic)

It's all right.

LUCKY

Fuck you, bitch. Why you always got something negative to say?!

LUCKY

At least the nigga's creative!

CHICAGO

I'm creative! I know how to dress.

LUCKY

That ain't shit. You just a post-office-working nigga can't even get into the union. What you got?

CHICAGO

What you got? Just cause you in the union don't mean shit !

JUSTICE

Why y'all always fightin? I thought y'all was friends?

CHICAGO

We ain't friends. We just work at the same place.

There is a pause. No one but the air moves. Iesha is restless. She gets up. Sobriety gives way to silliness. She stands and begins stomping on the ground and slapping her legs. She continues to do the "shake it to the east/shake it to the west" cheer.

IESHA

(to Justice)

Remember this?! Audubon Junior High?!  
"Shake it to tha east, shake it to  
tha west - it really doesn't matter  
who shakes the best!"

Justice joins in. The Two Guys just look at them crazy.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Chicago and Iesha poke their heads through the back. Everybody seems to be in a good mood. Iesha is telling a joke.

IESHA

So we up in heaven, right? And it's Judgment Day. And this brother goes up to the gate. The angel at the gate says, "How many times did you cheat on your wife?" The brother says, "I never cheated on my wife." So the angel checks the book and says, "You're right."

IESHA

So the brother rolls on into heaven in a Rolls-Royce... So another brother comes in and he says, "I can't lie. I cheated on my wife once." So the angel checks the book, and he rolls on into heaven in a Cadillac... So then this other brother comes in and he's a straight-up hoe, and he tells the angel, "Well, I can't remember how many times I cheated on my wife." So he goes and rolls into heaven on a bike. So now he's in heaven and he's just pedaling along, and he rolls by the brother in the Rolls, who is crying. So the brother on the bike says, "Why you crying? You rollin through heaven in a Rolls-Royce." And the brother in the Rolls says, "I just passed my wife on roller skates!"

Everybody laughs.

JUSTICE

(looks at Lucky)

You need to clean them nails. Get a manicure. Plenty men do it. Football players, basketball players. They all come in the shop.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

LUCKY (V.O.)

You out your mind!

Where we see the truck shoot up past a beautiful California backdrop.

EXT. ALICE'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Where we see Jessie's Lexus roll up, as well as the other car with the girls inside.

HEYWOOD (V.O.)

Finally! I could eat a horse!

JESSIE (V.O.)

From the looks this place, they probably have that on the menu.

They get out of the car and walk toward the restaurant.

THE TERRACE - OUTSIDE

Where some bikers sit eating lunch.

BIKER

So I said, Fuck that! got on my bike -  
ran 'em over!

He picks up a bottle of Evian and takes a squig.

INT. ALICE'S RESTAURANT - DAY - ANOTHER ANGLE - JESSIE'S POV

As we go into the cafe on the backs of Heywood and Dexter,  
who part to reveal a cafe full of bikers, motorists, and a  
Waitress. Jessie looks her up and down. The sound of Steely  
Dan 's "No Static at All" flows through the room. There is  
definitely a bohemian atmosphere here.

REVERSE ANGLE - JESSIE

Checking out the place.

WAITRESS

(instant attitude)  
How many?

JESSIE

Seven, please. Smoking section. I  
gotta have a cigarette.

WAITRESS

There is no smoking section.

JESSIE

I see. Just gimme a seat then.

WAITRESS

You can have that table over there  
once it's cleaned off.

THE TABLE

Where a man begins setting the table.

DEXTER

(to Heywood)  
Man, why you always rubbing your  
stomach?

Jessie playfully rubs Heywood's stomach. The Waitress comes  
back. The Waitress begins walking to a table across the room.  
Jessie and party follow.

DEXTER

Maybe we should go to an AMIPM on  
the way. I'm not that hungry.

JESSIE

I don't want no frozen food, no chips.  
I need something hot to eat. Besides,  
these folks need to see some Black  
people Sometimes. Wake 'em! Pick'em  
up! Give something interesting to  
talk about.

THE TABLE

Where they arrive and pick up menus. Jessie begins to look  
in a menu as she notices behind her a couple, white, twenty-  
something, who are arguing. Everybody else at the table looks  
over at the couple too. Jessie ignores this and begins to  
select from the menu.

HEYWOOD

I like this. Healthy food. Good  
people.

MAXINE

They got avocado salad. I love  
avocadoes.

JESSIE

Anyway. Make sure we got some tabasco  
sauce at this table. You know they  
food don't have no taste to it.

She looks in her purse, pulls out a pack of cigarettes, picks  
one out, and lights up.

ANOTHER TABLE

Where the Waitress takes another order. She keeps looking  
toward Jessie and Co.

DEXTER

Jessie, you know this is the  
nonsmoking section.

MAXINE

Look. Look. Girlfriend is tryin to  
decide whether or not to come and  
tell you to put it out.

We see the Waitress at the other table. She is definitely  
looking in Jessie's direction.

JESSIE

She better just keep thinking.

## WAITRESS'S POV

The Waitress begins walking toward Jessie. At the end of the shot she comes to the front of the table, just as Jessie lets out a cool puff of smoke and gives a look as if to say "What the hell you want?"

HEYWOOD

Oh look, baby's got some courage.  
Here she comes.

## ANGLE

The Waitress arrives at the table.

WAITRESS

You have to put your cigarette out.  
You're ruining the environment.

## THE KITCHEN

Where we see Arlo Guthrie flipping burgers on the grill and smoking a joint.

## BACK TO SCENE

JESSIE

(ignoring her)  
I'm almost Anished. Gotta satisfy my  
nic-fit. Be done in a sec.

WAITRESS

I'm not gonna take your order if you  
smoke.

JESSIE

(looks up)  
Well then, you can just stand there  
and wait until I finish my smoke.

WAITRESS

You are disturbing other customers.

JESSIE

(turns around to the  
other table)  
You mind?

The couple nods they don't mind.

JESSIE

(to her entourage)  
You mind?

Everybody at the table nods their approval.

JESSIE  
 (sarcastically)  
 Thank you.

The Waitress storms away as if she has been personally insulted.

JESSIE  
 With her Farrah Fawcett 1977 hairdo.  
 This place is a time warp.

They all laugh loudly. Jessie continues to smoke.

BACK TO TABLE

DEXTER  
 I think we should go.

JESSIE  
 Dexter, calm down. I ain't gonna let  
 you get lynched. This ain't  
 Mississippi.  
 (opens her purse)  
 You see that?

We see a .38 pistol inside her purse.

JESSIE  
 I got it all under control. I don't  
 play. Ask Maxine. You remember what  
 I did to that nigga in Riverside  
 that grabbed my booty?

HEYWOOD  
 (changing subject)  
 I wonder what happened to Justice?

COLETTE  
 I feel kinda bad she had to drive up  
 by herself.

JESSIE  
 She ain't by herself. She probably  
 with Iesha. Justice - now there's a  
 girl who's got some problems.

INT. MONTEREY AQUARIUM - DAY - UNDERWATER

We see a montage of different beautiful tropical fish.

JESSIE (V.O.)  
 Don't wanna go nowhere, don't wanna  
 have no fun, ain't seeing nobody...

We cut to a dolphin swimming toward frame, then PAN over to reveal Justice looking through an underwater viewing room.

JESSIE (V.O.)  
I think she need a boyfriend. Justice  
looks over toward...

LUCKY

Who is looking in another tank. He turns to look at Justice.

INT. ALICES RESTAURANT - DAY - BACK TO CAFE

Jessie pauses. Thinks. Puts out her cigarette and turns toward the Waitress.

JESSIE  
Hey! Farrah! come over here and take  
my order!

CUT TO:

EXT. AN OULET CALM BEAUTIFUL BEACH - DAY

We see an empty beach, dunes, flat sand. We PAN to reveal the mail truck parked on the sand. In the distance are four Agures. Justice, Lucky, Iesha, and Chicago. No one speaks. Everybody is doing their own thing. All we can hear is the voice of the Pacific Ocean. Justice sits on the sand, sifting it through her hands like a funnel. We hear her thoughts as she looks out onto the ocean.

JUSTICE (V.O.)  
A wise man once said, you should  
look at the ocean and realize that  
no matter how famous you are, or how  
much money you make, you should know  
that you will never be as important  
as the ocean... Damn, why didn't I  
go to college? Grandmomma would roll  
two times in her grave if she saw me  
now.  
(looks toward Lucky)  
Hmmm, he look kinda good. I know he  
got a kid, though. Look at him. He  
look like the type that got a baby  
stashed away somewheres.

Lucky and Chicago are throwing rocks, seeing who can make a rock skip the farthest. We hear Lucky's thoughts.

LUCKY (V.O.)  
She's kinda cute. Got a nice little  
frame. Maybe I should get that number,

LUCKY (V.O.)  
 see how that bootie works... I wonder  
 what Kalil's doing?

Iesha is playing in the warm sand. She has dug a hole and has placed her feet into it.

IESHA (V.O.)  
 I wonder if my momma picked up my  
 clothes from the cleaners... Oh, I  
 know what I gotta do when I get back.  
 I gotta call Terry with his fine  
 ass. Ask him to take me shoppin.

Chicago is throwing rocks in the water.

CHICAGO (V.O.)  
 I need to just let her ass go...  
 Fuck it! I can just go and get me  
 another bitch. I'm a good-looking  
 nigga. I got a job. Income. Car.  
 Apartment. My shit is set.

Chicago turns to look at Iesha. Note: Chicago in foreground, Iesha in background.

IESHA

Looks up at Chicago as if to say, "What the fuck you looking at?" Chicago turns back around to continue throwing rocks. Iesha turns to Justice.

IESHA  
 I'ma quit Chicago. His ass is L7  
 soon.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

The truck shoots past a beautiful expanse of California farmland.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY - MOVING THE BACK

Where Iesha and Chicago sit. Both look bored. Iesha's legs and arms are folded. Chicago gets up and looks into a bag and pulls out a couple of letters. He begins to open a few of them. Iesha looks surprised.

IESHA  
 You can't do that.

CHICAGO

Yeah, I can. Just put it in damage  
pile. It's fourth-class mail anyway.  
(reads)  
A love letter.

He smells the paper.

CHICAGO

Obsession.  
(to Iesha)  
You wear that too. Don't you? I like  
the way you smell.

Iesha sits across the way. Arms folded.

IESHA

I don't like the way you smell!

CHICAGO

(reading letter)  
"I can't wait to see you again. My  
heart arches with every day that you  
are gone. I had a dream last night,  
you were here, with me."  
(reads on to himself)

IESHA

You know you wrong.

Chicago looks up for a moment, then back to the letter.

IESHA

I'ma quit you when we get back to  
L.A. I'm young. I need to be alone  
for a while. Find myself and shit.

Chicago keeps reading the letter, acting like this isn't  
affecting him. Iesha snuggles into a corner and closes her  
eyes. Chicago looks over at her sleeping.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AFRICAN MARKET FESTNAG - DAY

We see images of dancers on a stage, people shopping at  
booths, carnival games. The air is alive with the sounds and  
smells of an African market festival. What follows is a  
Felliniesque scene on the Afrocentric tip. The sounds of  
African drums fill the air. Between the dialogue some striking  
visuals are intercut.

## ANGLE

As we see Justice and Lucky walking together. Justice is taking in the sights and sounds of her environment. She is almost childlike but very much an alive woman for once. She is blowing soap bubbles. Lucky seems lost in his own thoughts.

JUSTICE

What's wrong with you? Why you so quiet now?

LUCKY

Nuthin. I'm just thinking. I like to get out the city. Too much shit going down there. This is the only time I get to think. Or when I'm with my cousin and shit.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

Where we notice both Iesha and Chicago are not walking together.

IESHA

I'm getting tired of all this walking, J!

CHICAGO

Me too.

## BACK TO JUSTICE AND LUCKY

JUSTICE

So what you wanna do with your life?

LUCKY

Survive. Live. Shit. What you wanna do?

JUSTICE

I'm talking about goals, aspirations, shit like that.

LUCKY

I don't know yet. Music maybe.

JUSTICE

So what does your cousin rap about?

LUCKY

Stuff. Life.

JUSTICE

You sure he don't talk about typical shit?

LUCKY

What you mean typical? Like what?

JUSTICE

Like "I'm bad, I'm tha shit, I'll shoot a nigga in a minute, I get all the pussy." Stuff like that.

LUCKY

What you write about in that notebook you carry?

They stop to notice. A large Black bald muscular brother standing before one of those amusement things where you hit a peg with a sledgehammer and it goes up to a certain height. Several spectators are waiting to see the man hit the peg.

JUSTICE

Poetry.

LUCKY

You trying to say my cousin's shit ain't poetry?

THE STRONGMAN

Hits the peg! It flies up!

JUSTICE (V.O.)

It ain't if he just talk about himself. You gotta have something to say. Somethin different, a perspective.

The peg hits a bell, under which is written in red letters the word "REVOLUTION".

JUSTICE

A voice.

They turn to walk out of the crowd.

LUCKY

What you write about?

JUSTICE

I write about what's in my heart.

LUCKY

And what's that?  
(touches her shoulder)

She says nothing.

JUSTICE

I dunno. What's in yours?

LUCKY

I'm still trying to find out.  
 (notices the fact  
 that he has touched  
 Justice)

CHICAGO

Stands in a crowd. We are looking over his shoulder at Iesha throwing baseballs into holes. She wins a little bear, which brings a smile to her face. When she notices Chicago looking at her, it turns to a frown. Chicago then turns to look in Lucky and Justice's direction.

LUCKY AND JUSTICE

They are interrupted by Chicago's shouting.

CHICAGO

(shouting)  
 Why do we keep stopping? Don't we  
 have a schedule to keep to?

LUCKY

(shouting)  
 We got plenty o' time. What you  
 worried about, nigga? We always do  
 this.

CHICAGO

We need to hurry up and get where we  
 got to go. You keep proscratinatin.  
 (joking)  
 You keep trying to gib to that bitch!  
 That's tha problem.

JUSTICE

(ignoring Chicago)  
 There's a fruit stand over there. I  
 wanna get some plums.  
 (walks away)

CHICAGO

You can't pull that. She outta your  
 league.

Lucky just gives him a look. Then he turns, and...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Lucky and Chicago in a crowd of people.

Chicago walks away, frustrated, as we PULL BACK and around to see the source of the drums we have been hearing through this entire scene. It is the Last Poets, beating out the last couple of lines to "Niggas Are Scared of Revolution."

BLACK MAN

"But I'm a lover too! I'm a lover too! I love niggas! I love to see them walk, talk, and shoot tha shit! But there is one thing about niggas I do not love! Niggas are scared of Revolution!"

The crowd applauds.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.THE TRUCK - DAY - MOVING THE FRONT

Where we see Justice bite into a plum with her juicy lips.

LUCKY

You didn't wash it.

JUSTICE

Yeah, I did.

LUCKY

How?

Justice rubs the plum back and forth between her hands and kisses it up to God. Lucky looks on in amazement. All that is left is the seed, which Justice holds up proudly. She laughs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRASSY FLELD - DAY

We see Justice walking toward us through a field. She walks slowly, almost dreamlike. Over this we hear Justice's voice reading a poem. It is "Phenomenal Woman. "Suddenly, a zebra (yes a zebra) walks into the shot. First one, then another, then another. Soon there is a herd. Now we know we are in a dream - Until we hear Lucky's voice shout out.

LUCKY

Whatcha you doing?!

WIDE

Where we see the truck at the top of a hill that overlooks a field, in which we see Justice walking among African zebras. Chicago and Iesha get out of the truck and look down. Lucky has the hood up and is checking the engine.

JUSTICE  
 (shouting)  
 I wanna pet one of them!

ON THE HILL

IESHA  
 OOOOH!

BACK TO FIELD

Where Justice pets one of the animals.

LUCKY  
 They came from that castle over there.  
 Hearst Castle! They have a some kinda  
 private zoo there.

CHICAGO  
 They musta got out or somethin.

Chicago looks at Iesha. She senses she is being watched,  
 then she looks over at him and walks away. He follows her.

THE ROAD

Where we see the truck by the road with the castle in the  
 background. Iesha has walked to the back of the truck. Chicago  
 comes around the corner and tries to talk to her.

He tries a smoother approach.

CHICAGO  
 (smoothly)  
 So you wanna quit me, huh?

He puts his arms around her waist.

CHICAGO  
 Don't you know how much I love you?  
 Can I have a kiss?

She turns around to face him, and they kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TRUCK - MOVING - DAY

Where Chicago and Iesha are still kissing. They are getting  
 hot and heavy. Iesha is still doing this with some reluctance.

THE FRONT

Where Justice and Lucky sit. They are chummy-chummy now;  
 they talk like old friends.

JUSTICE

My first boyfriend used to get into a lot of shit... He got killed, though. Tried to jack the wrong person.

LUCKY

Tha jacker got himself jacked!

He laughs. Justice doesn't find it funny.

JUSTICE

He got killed over some stupid shit.

Lucky looks at her.

LUCKY

Then why you date fools like that?

JUSTICE

That's who I fell in love with. Didn't know no better.

LUCKY

What about now?

Justice has no reply. Lucky changes the subject.

LUCKY

How many brothers and sisters you got?

JUSTICE

None. My momma didn't have no more kids... She didn't get a chance to.

There is a somber moment. Lucky understands, vaguely. They hear a moaning sound. Justice motions for Lucky to be quiet. She peeks through the curtain.

THE CURTAIN

Where Iesha is now on top of Chicago. Riding him. Slowly she moves back and forth, her legs around his waist.

Suddenly, something is wrong. Iesha gets up.

THE BACK

Where we see Iesha looking frustrated.

IESHA

Is that it?!

CHICAGO

Shhh! Give me a coupla minutes.

IESHA

(louder)

Fuck that! You can't even hang that long! Couple minutes shit my ass!

CHICAGO

Fuck you.

IESHA

You can't! That's the muthafuckin problem!

They begin arguing loudly.

THE FRONT

Where Lucky and Justice listen to Iesha and Chicago going at it.

LUCKY

I'm getting sick of this shit.

JUSTICE

Pull over somewheres.

LUCKY

Here we go again.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCK CLIFF - DAY - FROM OVERHEAD

We see the truck pull to the side of the road. Iesha hops out, closely followed by Chicago. We MOVE slowly with them to reveal they have parked next to a cliff that overlooks the Pacific Ocean and some other rocky cliffs. In the distance we see Chicago and Iesha arguing.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As we see Iesha and Chicago squabble. We cannot hear them shouting at each other over the loud ocean waves crashing among the rocks below the cliff. The wind is blowing with a strong force.

THE TRUCK

Where Lucky and Justice sit. Justice is watching. Lucky minds his own business. He glances at his nails.

## THE ROCKS

Where we see the waves crashing against the side of the cliff, eroding its sides bit by bit.

We juxtapose images of the waves to the ballet of Iesha and Chicago arguing. He pulls at her. She pulls away, etc. Their dialogue is drowned out by the sounds of the raging ocean. Iesha gets fed up and walks toward the truck.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

As we come down and follow Iesha. We can fully hear them arguing now.

IESHA

You weak! You a weak-ass punk! Just  
'cause work out don't mean shit!  
Think you buff! I wish I ever met  
your sorry ass! Sorry muthafucka!

Chicago takes his brush out of his back pocket and begins brushing his head. He is trying to maintain his cool because they are now in front of Lucky and Justice.

IESHA

Yeah, that's right. Brush that hair.  
Weak-ass fade! Nigga dick can't stay  
hard five seconds. Watcha do, take  
steroids?!

We see Iesha's mouth in CLOSEUP. She continues to lay on the insults as we SLOW DOWN TIME. Chicago continues to brush his head. He concentrates on looking at Iesha's mouth running a mile a minute.

## REAL TIME

IESHA

That's why I'm fucking somebody else!

This catches Chicago's attention. He stops brushing his head, and calmly walks toward Iesha, as we PULL BACK with him to an over-the-shoulder with Iesha.

## JUSTICE

Is wondering what will happen next.

## CLOSE ON CHICAGO'S FACE

He is angry.

CLOSE ON IESHA'S FACE

Who gives him a look that reads, "You ain't gonna do shit!"  
She continues to taunt him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Lucky, as he turns away.

LUCKY

Awww, shit!

SLOW MOTION

As Chicago slaps the shit outta Iesha. Her back is to CAMERA  
so that we can see the fury in Chicago's face.

ANGLE - SLOW MOTION

Chicago's hand hitting Iesha.

BACK TO NORMAL SPEED

Iesha reels back, then recovers. She touches her mouth. There  
is blood on her hand. She looks up toward Chicago. We see  
fire and fury in her eyes, and then... IESHA GOES MUTHAFUCKING  
CRAZY!!!

IESHA

(shouting and echoing)

Muthafucka!!!!

Iesha charges toward Chicago with fury. Hell hath no fury  
like a Black woman's scorn. Iesha and Chicago fight. Each is  
cursing at the other. To our surprise this is no one-sided  
battle: Iesha is holding her own. She hits Chicago square on  
the chin with a wild punch. Chicago reels back in shock and  
continues fighting.

Justice is going crazy. She doesn't know what to do.

JUSTICE

(to Lucky)

You just gonna let 'em fight?!

LUCKY

That ain't my business.

Wild with frustration, Justice gets out of the truck and  
walks toward the fighting couple. Lucky gets outta the truck.

CHICAGO AND IESHA

The tide has turned on the fight - Chicago is kicking Iesha's  
ass now. She swings a wild punch, and he connects with a

direct hit. Chicago drops back to get his bearings. We see Justice come up in the background. Boom! A foot slams between Chicago's legs. Chicago grabs his crotch in pain. He slowly turns, then charges Justice. They tumble on the ground, and he reels back to hit her.

LUCKY (O.S.)

Hey!

ANGLE

On Lucky, who walks toward us with anger.

LUCKY

What tha fuck is wrong with you,  
nigga?! Get the fuck offa her!

CHICAGO

(getting up)  
What's wrong you?

LUCKY

What you beating up on females for,  
dude?! That shit is weak!

CHICAGO

(pushes Lucky)  
Aw, punk. You just saying that shit  
'cause you strung out over this bitch!  
Moralistic muthafucka!

Lucly walks closer to Chicago and socks him in the stomach. He folds like a set of new French doors.

LUCKY

If you was a real man, your shit  
woul'da been straight from tha git  
and you wouldn't haveto hit your  
girl. Punkass.

(helps Justice up)  
Get up. You all right?

Justice murmurs a "yes" and walks over to attend to Iesha. Lucky is left standing alone. He thinks.

JUSTICE AND IESHA

Where Justice helps her friend up Iesha is scratched. She continues to curse with a bloodied mouth. Iesha pulls away, attempting to continue fighting, only to be restrained by Justice.

IESHA

(crying)  
Fuck that muthafucka!

IESHA

He getting jacked! I'ma, I'ma call  
Dooby, I'ma call Monster Loci They  
gonna shoot that nigga. He ain't  
nobody's daddy!

Lucky looks over at Iesha. He doesn't notice Chicago getting up and charging him. Lucky and Chicago get into a brawl. They tumble and wrestle, punches are thrown, kicking, all the elements of a good scrap. Lucky prevails. He gets up.

LUCKY

Fuck you, phunk. I'm leaving your  
stupid ass!

CHICAGO

(coughing)  
You can't leave me! We got a job to  
do!

LUCKY

Fuck this muthafuckin job! My momma  
didn't have me so I could work at no  
muthafuckin post office all my life!  
Shit! Catch a bus to 'Frisco.' We  
only forty miles away.

He walks away. Justice and Iesha are getting into the truck. Chicago suddenly becomes apologetic.

CHICAGO

Naw, man. I'm sorry, dude! Yo, we  
friends, man. Fuck them hoes! Why  
don't leave them, dude?! Why you  
tripping?!

WIDE

As the truck drives on, leaving Chicago on the road. A duffel bag is thrown out the window. Chicago continues to shout out at Lucky: "Watch you doing, man?" and "Stop bullshitting!"

ANOTHER ANGLE - BACK OF TRUCK POV

As we PULL AWAY from Chicago shouting at the truck. We hear Justice's voice over the following images.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Is it true the ribs can tell the  
kick of a beast from a Lover's fist?"

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY - THE BACK

Where Justice holds Iesha in her arms. Iesha cries.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"The bruised bones recorded well.  
The sudden shock, the hard impact.  
Then swollen lids..."

THE FRONT

Where Lucky drives alone. He is very upset.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Sorry eyes, spoke not of lost  
romance, but hurt."

BACK TO ROAD

Chicago staggers a couple of feet, looks around, picks up his brush. He sits by the side of the road and begins to brush the back of his head.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Hate is often confused. Its limits  
are in zones beyond itself. And  
sadists will not learn that..."

BACK TO LUCKY

Who pulls over the truck in frustration.

THE BACK SEAT

Leave time for voice over, then Justice speaks.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

"Love by nature, exacts a pain  
unequaled on the rack."

Justice looks up from holding her crying friend. She has noticed the truck has stopped moving.

JUSTICE

You all right?

IESHA

Yeah. Why we stopped?

JUSTICE

I don't know.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY - OVERHEAD ON CRANE

We see Justice get out of the truck as we DESCEND to let her pass, then go back UP to reveal they are on another peak overlooking the Pacific Ocean. We see Lucky sitting on the grass in the far distance. Justice walks out to talk to him. A blanket drapes her shoulders.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

As we see Justice come forward and drop down to sit next to Lucky. There is a pause. Neither one of them says anything. All we can hear is the sounds of the ocean and the sea gulls. Justice attempts to break the ice.

JUSTICE

(laughs)

They was gonna break up anyway.

(reminiscing)

I remember when I was little and my uncle Leon used to come around and give me and my cousins change. He would go to the liquor store, buy a forty-ounce of beer, then throw us the change. And I'd always ask for the "big nickel." I couldn't pronounce quarter, so that's what I'd call it.

(to Lucky)

Yuk, look at them nails. Give me your hand.

Lucky gives her his hand. Justice looks in her pocket and produces a nail file. She begins to file Lucky's nails. Lucky shows his discomfort.

JUSTICE

Anyway, so because of that my grandmother used to say I was always looking for the big nickel. Anything I did- ride a bike, go to school, do somebody's hair - she'd say "Justice! You still looking for that big nickel?" That was before she died.

Lucky looks at the concern on her face.

LUCKY

When she die?

JUSTICE

About two years ago. She left me her house. My mother died when I was twelve. Suicide. She named me Justice cause she was in law school when she got pregnant with me... I'm all alone. I got a cat, though.

LUCKY

Damn.

Justice looks at Lucky's nails. Their eyes meet. They kiss. Justice looks at Lucky's nails. Tilt to nails, clean, filed. Tilt up, they kiss.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Where we see Iesha inside. She has cried herself to sleep.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY - THE GRASS

Where Lucky and Justice continue to kiss. Justice stands up for a moment, looks off into the distance. We hear her thoughts over the following images.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

Give me your hand. Make room for me  
to lead and follow you beyond this  
rage of poetry.

Then she opens the blanket up like a cape and surrounds Lucky.  
The make love.

JUSTICE (V.O.)

Let others have the privacy of  
touching words and love of loss of  
love. For me, give me your hand.

WIDE

As we see them against the backdrop of the grass and the beautiful Pacific Ocean. The blanket erupts with the ripple of their bodies.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

Where we see the truck shooting up the pacific Coast Highway

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Where Lucky and Justice ride on. Suddenly something catches Justice's eye.

JUSTICE'S POV

Off the road she sees a dilapidated empty drive-in theater.  
She and Lucky exchange a glance.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WINDMILL VALLEY - DUSK

We see a windmill. Then another, then another Then we see a whole hill covered with windmills. We see the truck coming through the hills. The hills are revered with windmills.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE ROAD - DUSK

We start on the truck coming up the road, then PAN with it to REVEAL a sign that reads "YOU ARE NOW ENTERING OAKLAND".

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRUCK - DUSK

Where Lucky and Justice ride along.

LUCKY'S POV

Where he sees a big brawl in the street. Docu-style realism sets back in. BACK TO TRUCK Justice turns to Lucky and smiles. Lucky just looks at her. Then he lowers the boom.

LUCKY

I gotta tell you something.

Justice turns her attention out the window. She sighs. She can sense this is gonna be something heavy.

JUSTICE'S POV

Subjective to objective, then reveal Justice. There is a car accident in the street.

JUSTICE

What? Oh shit, don't tell me you got somethin!

LUCKY

No. But listen - I'm only saying this cause I like you and you should know before anything else happens.

EXT. OAKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT

Where we see the mail truck turn a corner and go up a street. In the far distance we can see the red lights of an ambulance.

INT. THE TRUCK-NIGHT

Where the flashing lights fall upon Lucky's face. He ignores them and pulls to the curb.

JUSTICE

A little girl, huh? Why didn't you tell me that shit from the beginning?

LUCKY

I didn't think it was important. How was I to know we wuz gonna... hold

LUCKY  
 on, let me just check in with my  
 cousin.

He gets out of the truck.

EXT. OAKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT - A WALKWAY

Where Lucky gets out of the truck and walks up to his Aunt Audrey's house, notebook in hand. He is on cloud nine and in the best of spirits. People are running past him and down the street toward the ambulance and police lights.

BACK TO TRUCK

Where Justice and Iesha emerge.

IESHA  
 (stretching)  
 What we doing here? How come we didn't  
 go to the hotel? Shit, I'm tired.

THE DOORWAY

Where Lucky arrives to notice that it is open. Empty. Dark.

LUCKY  
 Kalil! Aunt Audrey! Anybody in here!?

He goes in.

ANOTHER ANGLE - NEW SHOT

As Lucky comes back out and looks down the street. He senses something wrong. Lucky hops off of the porch and runs with the rest of the crowd down the street. We follow with him some ways then swing around in front of him. Lucky pauses in shock. We hear screams. Lucky comes forward as we move with him to reveal his cousin Kalil on a bloody stretcher, his aunt Audrey frozen in shock, and a crowd of spectators standing around. Lucky makes his way to his aunt, and they embrace.

CLOSEUP - LUCKY

As he looks up from his aunt toward the ambulance. In the background an attendant is trying to get some information from Lucky and his aunt. They say nothing. Also we hear the various voices of people in the crowd with a thousand explanations of what happened.

TIMESLOWS DOWN - JUSTICE AND IESHA

Walk up. Both stand there in shock. We frame up Lucky holding his aunt in the foreground, with the two women in the background.

INT. AMBULANCE DOOR POV

Where the door is closed and the truck moves away, revealing Lucky and his aunt still embracing. He leads her toward her home.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE TRUCK - NIGHT

Lucky is driving. Justice sits in the next seat. Solemn. Iesha is in the back quiet and frozen.

EXT. OAKLAND HOTEL - NIGHT

We see Jessie come down some stairs and enter some change into a cigarette machine. It takes her change, she hits it a couple of times, and a pack comes out.

THE PARKING LOT

The truck comes into the lot, and Justice and Iesha hop out. Lucky comes around from the driver's side. Iesha looks as though she wants to say something to Lucky, but she can't bring out the words.

IESHA

You all right?

Lucky has no reaction. Iesha backs up and reluctantly walks away, leaving Lucky and Justice alone.

LUCKY

Walks over to the front grill of the truck and sits down.

JESSIE

As Iesha walks past her, and she watches and waits to talk to Justice.

JUSTICE

Follows him and sits next to him. She puts her arms around Lucky and tenderly kisses him. She kisses his neck, face, etc. The music gets higher. Everything is romantic, then Lucky puts his head down then looks back up.

LUCKY

I mighta got there on time if I hadn't  
been fucking around wit you.

He walks away.

JUSTICE

(confused, shocked)  
What?!

ANOTHER ANGLE - WLDE SHOT - PARKING LOT - SFX

As we see the truck start up and back away from Justice.  
Leaving her standing there alone. She walks toward the hotel  
and Jessie.

JESSIE

You scraping the bottom of the pudding  
cup now, huh?

JUSTICE

(pissed off)  
Know what you talking about before  
you judge.

They walk on.

JESSIE

Oooh, you even walk different.

Justice just turns to look at Jessie, then she walks on.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. / EXT. THE POST OFFICE - POV - BACK OF TRUCK - NIGHT

Lucky opens the back door, and we see him and a Dockworker  
talking. Several workmen begin unloading boxes and bags off  
the truck.

DOCKWORKER

(filling out a form)  
I thought there was supposed to be  
two of you?

LUCKY

Nope.

DOCKWORKER

Well, see ya next time around.

LUCKY

(taking the form)  
I don't think so!

INT. JUSTICE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

There is a conference going on. Justice, Iesha. Jessie, and Heywood are present. From the looks on their faces, we can tell what the topic of discussion is: men. Iesha is holding a cold towel to her eye.

HEYWOOD

Hold it there. It may swell a little.  
Let me see it.

She takes the towel away. We see her eye. It's a small shiner.

HEYWOOD

Awww, that ain't that bad.

IESHA

(looks at him like  
he's crazy)  
It ain't.

Jessie looks at Iesha's eye.

JESSIE

That ain't nuthin, girl. I got this girlfriend Susan, she got this thing where she don't think a man loves her unless he beats her. Anyway, this nigga went off on her once, and her eyes were so big. You know them Dunkin' Donuts?

HEYWOOD

The big ones with the glaze on 'em?

JESSIE

Yeah, those the ones. Well, you take two of those, put them on both eyes, and that's what she looked like. You young. You gonna learn. Don't fight no man with you fists - you fight him in his wallet. Now instead of swinging on 'em, you shouda gave him some, let 'em go to sleep, reached into his wallet, and took his credit card.

HEYWOOD

And we all woulda had a party!

JESSIE

On him!

Jessie and Heywood laugh. They start reminiscing, uttering past stories. Iesha cuts them off.

IESHA  
 What credit card? That nigga ain't  
 got no credit card!

Jessie turns and stops.

JESSIE  
 Well, shit then, you is a fool.  
 (laughing and looking  
 at Iesha's eye)  
 Men ain't shit.

Jessie and Heywood start laughing again.

JUSTICE  
 That's the truth.

Jessie stops laughing.

JESSIE  
 Excuse me? I thought you was in love.

JUSTICE  
 You thought wrong. Don't assume. You  
 assume, and you make an ass outta  
 you and me.

JESSIE  
 You were already an ass. Ya'll still  
 gotta lot to learn about the world.

Justice's face, as Jessie's words sink in.

JESSIE  
 C'mon, Heywood. Let's go get a drink.  
 (walks away, mumbles)  
 These little young girls don't know  
 they cuchie from a hole in the wall.  
 Shit, I just rest and dress, honey.  
 Love don't live here anymore.

Justice returns to consoling her friend, but we can tell her  
 mind is miles away.

JUSTICE  
 It ain't that bad.

She helps her with the towel on her eye.

THE DOORWAY

Where Colette sticks her head in.

COLETTE  
 Is everything all right?

Justice turns around, Iesha is cradled in her arms.

JUSTICE

No.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE SOUND LAB - NIGHT

Lucky's cousin 's makeshift recording studio. We see a four track, a drum machine, a keyboard, two turntables, a large boom box, a rhyme dictionary and thesaurus, and a ton of records. The walls are covered with the faces of the heroes of hip-hop. Posters of Public Enemy, KRS-One, EPMD, and everybody else who is truly down. Among the mess Lucky spots a tape that reads "LUCKY'S NEW BEATS". He pops it in the box. We hear the beat. It is a smooth, Loc'd out gangsta groove. Lucky listens for a moment, then presses STOP OR the box. He thinks for a moment, then hits his hand on the desk and stands. Then he sits once more to think. Like "The Thinker."

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE SOUND LAB - DAY

The light changes to a golden hue as a new day arrives, and we see Lucky, who has apparently fallen asleep in the chair. He awakes. He sits up, leaving an afterimage of his sleeping self on the chair. When he stands, it disappears! He smells the air: Food. We hear children playing upstairs.

INT. AUNTAUDREY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Where Aunt Audrey is cooking up a storm: A real southern breakfast. We see eggs, bacon, fried chicken, biscuits, etc. Aunt Audrey is cooking to keep her mind off of the death of her firstborn. Also in the kitchen is Uncle Earl, Audrey's brother Tequan, her second son Shante, her daughter, and a few other family members young and old.

AUNT AUDREY

(manages a smile)

Morning, Lawrence. You hungry, baby?  
C'mon over here and get you somethin  
to eat.

Lucky goes over to the table.

LUCKY

I ain't hungry. I'm too mad to eat.

Audrey has no reply to this.

## THE STOVE - A FRYING PAN

Where Aunt Audrey pulls some chicken wings out to drain on some paper towels. She pauses for a moment and attempts not to lose her composure.

UNCLE EARL

Audrey, sit down. Sit down. You gonna wear yourself out.

Audrey sits down across from Lucky. She looks as though she is in a daze of depression. Her gaze finds Lucky.

AUDREY

Lawrence and Kalil useta do music together. They used to make them tapes. They was trying to do something with they lives. Something constructive instead of destructive.

She laments for a moment.

AUDRY

Shante, check that chicken, baby. Make sure it don't burn.

(a beat)

Lawrence, I want - I want you to know you my favorite nephew. Your mother, even though we sisters, we don't always get along. I was always happy you and Kalil were more like brothers than cousins. Family should stick together no matter what.

LUCKY

What you gonna do with all this equipment?

SHANTE

(nonchalantly)

Sell it.

LUCKY

What?

SHANTE

We need the money.

LUCKY

Every dollar he made went into that room. Why every time people try to build and do somethin, somebody gotta come along fuck up shit?!

AUDREY  
What do you think we should do?

LUCKY  
Give it to me. I'll do somethin with  
it.

SHANTE  
(sarcastic)  
Like what?

AUDREY  
(looks over to stove)  
Shante! Turn the fire off. Take them  
wings out the skillet and drain off  
all that oil. My blood pressure's  
bad enough as it is.  
(turns back to Lucky)  
Anyway, what would you do with it?

LUCKY  
(looks around)  
Use it.

CUT TO:

EXT. AUDREY'SHOUSE - DAY

Where we see Lucky and some of his cousins loading the  
equipment back into the mail truck. Aunt Audrey gives Lucky  
a hug before he gets into his truck. Over these images we  
hear Audrey's voice.

AUDREY (V.O.)  
Well, take it then. Just 'cause my  
baby didn't get a chance to realize  
his dream don't mean you can't do  
what you gotta do.

LUCKY STARTS ON THE TRUCK

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

Traveling montage on the road. Beautiful sights of California.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

Lucky's face from outside the truck while it is moving. The  
truck speeds up, and goes into the distance. We hear Justice's  
voice: another poem begins.

## INT. THE HAIR SHOW - DAY

As we TRAVEL through the Oakland Hair Show from a docu-style perspective. Heywood is behind the camera. There are many exhibits on display. We see new products being introduced Salesmen on different montages peddling everything from mousse to gels to tools. Our attention is drawn to the various hairstyles present and the reactions of the characters to being filmed. We see Jessie and entourage walking through the crowd having a good time. She is pointing at people and making comments. Heywood points the camera at Dexter: "Sexy Dex." Eventually we see Justice. She is attending to Lisa and Gena's hair, as well as the hair of two other women. They're her models, for her hairstyles. There are many other stylists doing other people's heads also. Justice is noticeably nervous at being recorded She tells Heywood to turn that shit off. End of docu-style.

## THE RUNWAY

Where we see the models come forth. Our attention is drawn to their heads as we notice their beautiful intricate hairstyles. The hairstyles are like sculpture.

## TABLE OF JUDGES

Watches the models as they come forth.

## EXT. THE DESERT - DAY

Where we see Lucky walking along the road in the desert. The truck is nearby in the distance. He is thinking.

## INT. THE HAIR SHOW - DAY

Justice lets out a breath. The Judges begin to talk and review their notes.

DISSOLVE TO:

## AN AWARDS CEREMONY

Trophies are given out to representatives from different salons. Justice receives a trophy and is congratulated by Jessie and company. She holds it up for all to see. But she is not happy. She smiles an uneasy grin.

## EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

We end on an image of the truck going across the horizon.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. JESSIES SALON - DAY - MONTAGE

We see hair and nails being done. Everything seems normal once more in the shop. A voice changes the mood.

RITA (V.O.)

Bitch, if you don't quit staring at me, I'm gonna knock them eyes outta your head!

THE STYLLSTS

Look up.

WAITING BENCHES

Where two women sitting across from each other are looking at each other like cats in a fight. The first one is Rita, the second one is Simone. Simone is kinda prissy. She talks to her friend next to her.

SIMONE

I can't even deal wit her skainchie ass! She just better stay away from James.

A HAIR STATION

Where Jessie is doing someone's head.

JESSIE

Hey, hey, hey, why we gotta have this here? Take your shit out in the street. I got enough problems as it is.

RITA

(stands up to leave,  
looks at Simone)

Yeah, bitch, you can say what you want. But remember this, every time you kiss him, you tasting my pussy!

CONTINUED: JUSTICE'S STATION

Where she stands attending to a client's head. Her face looks much as it did at the beginning of the film. Only this time she is made up more. Justice finishes the woman's head and begins cleaning up.

## THE DOORWAY

Where Rita leaves, and Lucky enters with Keisha in hand. He is dressed in very casual attire. As soon as he enters, his presence is felt by every woman in the shop. Justice looks up and, noticing Lucky, excuses herself from her client and goes over toward the counter.

## LUCKY'S POV

As we slowly move forward toward Justice. She looks around to see the reactions from the other women.

## BACK TO LUCKY

Who reaches the counter and casually leans against it, looking at the other women. His gaze reaches a couple of them, who instinctively look away. He turns to face Justice.

LUCKY

What's up?

JUSTICE

Who's this?

KEISHA

Keisha.

They shake hands.

JUSTICE

My name's Justice.

KEISHA

What's Justice?

Lucky and Justice just smile.

LUCKY

(motions toward the  
couch)

Mind if we sit down?

## ANOTHER ANGLE

As the party of three all sit down. Simone and her friend sit across from them. Both women are nosy and attempt to listen in on the conversation between Lucky and Justice.

LUCKY

Ah, mm, well, listen I want you to know I'm sorry. I made a mistake.

JUSTICE

Come closer. I wanna whisper somethin  
to you.

LUCKY

Get the fuck outta here. I ain't  
fallin for that shit again.

JUSTICE

Naw, seriously - come here.

They look at each other. Get closer. They kiss. The kiss is  
initiated by Justice, which surprises Lucky.

THE SHOP

Where Jessie and the rest of the salon look equally surprised.

JUSTICE

Your nails look clean.

LUCKY

(looks at nails)  
I wonder why?  
(to Simone and party)  
What you looking at?

Justice's gaze turns away from Lucky to Keisha.

JUSTICE

What did you do to this little girl's  
hair?

LUCKY

Nuthin.

JUSTICE

It looks like it. C'mere, little  
girl.

ANGLE

As Justice guides Keisha toward her station. She sits Keisha  
in the chair and proceeds to analyze what can be done with  
her hair.

THE COUCH

Where Lucky looks at Justice playing with his daughter's  
hair. There is a glazed look on his eyes.

LUCKY'S POV - MOVIN TOWARD JUSTICE

As he/we see Justice skillfully working on Keisha's hair. We hear Justice's voice over as she says another poem. At the end of the poem, Justice looks up toward Lucky/us. She smiles.

FADE OUT

THE END